

The **Bloodcurdling Bookends** of **Jules de Grandin**

by Seabury Quinn



**THE FIRST CASE & THE FINAL CASE
OF THE LEGENDARY OCCULT DETECTIVE**

If you're already reading this, you probably already know who Jules de Grandin was.

So, just a few quick comments.

This file contains rough 'n' ready scans of his first and final appearances. Unfortunately, at time of writing, I only had access to a 1976 paperback copy of the first story so it might not be quite accurate to the original version in "Weird Tales". The final story, however, is scanned directly from the pulp.

Not great scans, but readable.

Between these two 'bookends', you'll find pulp scholar Robert Sampson's brilliantly-written essay on the entire 93-story series.

Two related stories that I briefly considered for inclusion were "The Stone Image" (The Thrill Book, May 1919) which includes a character who may be a younger Dr Trowbridge; and "Fortune's Fools" (Weird Tales, Jul 1938) which showcases Ramon de Grandin, an obvious ancestor of Jules. Both stories are mentioned here for completeness.

Terror on the Links

It must have been past midnight when the skirling of my bedside telephone awakened me, for I could see the moon well down toward the horizon as I looked through the window while reaching for the instrument.

"Dr. Trowbridge," an excited voice bored through the receiver, "this is Mrs. Maitland. Can you come over right away? Something dreadful has happened to Paul!"

"Eh?" I answered half asleep. "What's wrong?"

"We—we don't know," she replied jerkily. "He's unconscious. You know, he'd been to the dance at the country club with Gladys Phillips, and we'd been in bed for hours when we heard someone banging on the door. Mr. Maitland went down, and when he opened the door Paul fell into the hall. Oh, Doctor, he's been hurt dreadfully. Won't you please come right over?"

Physicians' sleep is like a park—public property. With a sigh I climbed out of bed and into my clothes, teased my superannuated motor to life and set out for the Maitland house.

Young Maitland lay on his bed, eyes closed, teeth clenched, his face set in an expression of unutterable dread, even in his unconsciousness. Across his shoulders and on the backs of his arms I found several long incised wounds, as though the flesh had been raked by a sharp pronged instrument.

I sterilized and bandaged the cuts and applied restoratives, wondering what sort of encounter had produced such burts.

"Help! Help! O, God, help!" the lad muttered thickly, like a person trying to call out in a nightmare. "Oh, oh, it's got me; it's"—his words drowned in a gurgling, in-

articulate cry of fear and he sat bolt upright, staring round with vacant, fear-filmed eyes.

"Easy, easy on, young fellow," I soothed. "Lie back, now; take it easy, you're all right. You're home in bed."

He looked uncomprehendingly at me a moment, then fell to babbling inanely. "The ape-thing—the ape-thing! It's got me! Open the door; for God's sake, open the door!"

"Here," I ordered gruffly as I drove my hypodermic into his arm, "none o' that. You quiet down."

The opiate took effect almost immediately, and I left him with his parents while I returned to catch up the raveled ends of my torn sleep.

Headlines shrieked at me from the front page of the paper lying beside my breakfast grapefruit:

SUPER FIEND SOUGHT IN GIRL'S SLAYING

Body of Young Woman Found Near Sedgemore
Country Club Mystifies Police—Criminal
Pervert Blamed for Killing—Arrest Imminent

Almost entirely denuded of clothing, marred by a score of terrible wounds, her face battered nearly past recognition and her neck broken, the body of pretty Sarah Humphreys, 19, a waitress in the employ of the Sedgemore Country Club, was found lying in one of the bunkers of the club's golf course this morning by John Burroughs, a greens keeper. Miss Humphreys, who had been employed at the clubhouse for three months, completed her duties shortly before midnight, and, according to statements of fellow workers, declared she was going to take a short cut across the links to the Andover Road, where she could get a late bus to the city. Her body, terribly mutilated, was found about 25 yards from the road on the golf course this morning.

Between the golf links and the Andover Road is a dense growth of trees, and it is thought the young woman was attacked while walking along the path through

the woods to the road. Deputy Coroner Nesbett, who examined the body, gave his opinion that she had been dead about five hours when found. She had not been criminally assaulted.

Several suspicious characters have been seen in the neighborhood of the club's grounds recently, and the police are checking up on their movements. An early arrest is expected.

"There's two gintelmen to see ye, sor." Nora McGinnis, my household factotum, interrupted my perusal of the paper. "'Tis Sergeant Costello an' a Frinchman, or Eytalian, or sumpin. They do be warntin' ter ax ye questions about th' murther of th' pore little Humphreys gurl."

"Ask *me* about the murder?" I protested. "Why, the first I knew of it was when I looked at this paper, and I'm not through reading the account of the crime yet."

"That's all right, Dr. Trowbridge," Detective Sergeant Costello answered with a laugh as he entered the dining room. "We don't figure on arrestin' you, but there's some questions we'll be askin', if you don't mind. This is Professor de Grandin of the Paris police. He's been doin' some work for his department over here, an' when this murder broke he offered th' chief his help. We'll be needin' it, too, I'm thinkin'. Professor de Grandin, Dr. Trowbridge," he waved an introductory hand from one of us to the other.

The professor bowed stiffly from the hips in continental fashion, then extended his hand with a friendly smile. He was a perfect example of the rare French blond type, rather under medium height, but with a military erectness of carriage that made him seem several inches taller than he actually was. His light blue eyes were small and exceedingly deep-set, and would have been humorous had it not been for the curiously cold directness of their gaze. With his blond mustache waxed at the ends in two perfectly horizontal points and those twinkling, stock-taking eyes, he reminded me of an alert tom-cat. Like a cat's, too, was his lithe, noiseless step as he crossed the room to shake hands.

"I fear Monsieur Costello gives you the misapprehen-

sion, doctor," he said in a pleasant voice, almost devoid of accent. "It is entirely true I am connected with the *Service de Sûreté*, but not as a vocation. My principal work is at the University of Paris and St. Lazaire Hospital; at present I combine the vocation of *savant* with the avocation of criminologist. You see—"

"Why," I interrupted as I grasped his slim, strong hand, "you're Professor Jules de Grandin, the author of *Accelerated Evolution*?"

A quick, infectious grin swept across his mouth and was reflected in his eyes. "You know me, *hein*? "Good, it is that I am among friends! However, at the moment our inquiries lie in quite another field. You have a patient, one Monsieur Paul Maitland, yes? He was set upon last night in the Andover Road, no?"

"I have a patient named Paul Maitland," I admitted, "but I don't know where he received his injuries."

"Nor do we," he answered with a smile, "but we shall inquire. You will go with us while we question him, no?"

"Why, yes," I acquiesced. "I should be looking in on him this morning, anyhow."

"And now, young Monsieur," Professor de Grandin began when introductions had been completed, "you will please tell us what happened last night to you. Yes?"

Paul looked uncomfortably from one of us to the other and swallowed nervously. "I don't like to think of it," he confessed, "much less talk about it; but here's the truth, believe it or not:

"I took Gladys home from the club about 11 o'clock, for she had developed a headache. After I'd said good night to her I decided to go home and turn in, and had gotten nearly here when I reached in my pocket for a cigarette. My case was gone, and I remembered laying it on a window ledge just before my last dance.

"The Mater gave me that case last birthday, and I didn't want to lose it, so, instead of telephoning the club and asking one of the fellows to slip it in his pocket, like a fool I decided to drive back for it.

"You know—at least Dr. Trowbridge and Sergeant Costello do—the Andover Road dips down in a little

valley and curves over by the edge of the golf course between the eighth and ninth holes. I'd just reached that part of the road nearest the links when I heard a woman scream twice—it really wasn't two screams, more like one and a half, for her second cry was shut off almost before it started.

"I had a gun in my pocket, a little .22 automatic—good thing I did, too—so I yanked it out and drew up at the roadside, leaving my engine running. That was lucky, too, believe me.

"I ran into the woods, yelling at the top of my voice, and there I saw something dark, like a woman's body, lying across the path. I started toward it when there was a rustling in the trees overhead and—*plop!*—something dropped right down in front of me.

"Gentlemen, I don't know what it was, but I know it wasn't human. It wasn't quite as tall as I, but it looked about twice as wide, and its hands hung down. Clear down to the ground.

"I yelled, 'What the hell goes on here?' and pointed my gun at it, and it didn't answer, just started jumping up and down, houncing with its feet and hands on the ground at once. I tell you, it gave me the horrors.

"*'Snap out of it,'* I yelled again, *'or I'll blow your head off.'* Next moment—I was so nervous and excited I didn't know what I was doing—I let fly with my pistol, right in the thing's face.

"That came near bein' my last shot, too. Believe me or not, that thing, whatever it was, reached out, snatched the gun out of my hand, and broke it. Yes, sir, snapped that pistol in two with its hare hands as easily as I could break a match.

"Then it was on me. I felt one of its hands go clear over my shoulder from breast to back in a single clutch, and it pulled me toward it. Ugh! It was hairy, sir. Hairy as an ape!"

"*Morbleu!* Yes? And then?" de Grandin prompted eagerly.

"Then I lunged out with all my might and kicked it on the shins. It released its grip a second, and I beat it. Ran as I never had on the quarter-mile track, jumped into my

car and took off down the road with everything wide open. But I got these gashes in my back and arms before I got to the roadster. He made three or four grabs for me, and every one of 'em took the flesh away where his nails raked me. By the time I got home I was almost crazy with fright and pain and loss of blood. I remember kicking at the door and yelling for the folks to open, and then I went out like a light."

The boy paused and regarded us seriously. "You think that I'm the biggest liar out of jail, most likely, but I've been telling you the absolute, straight truth, sirs."

Costello looked skeptical, but de Grandin nodded eagerly, affirmatively. "But certainly you speak the truth, *mon vieux*," he agreed. "Now, tell me, if you can, this *poilu*, this hairy one, how was he dressed?"

"U'm." Paul wrinkled his brow. "I can't say surely, for it was dark in the woods and I was pretty rattled, but—I think it was in evening clothes. Yes; I'd swear to it. I saw his white shirt bosom."

"Ah?" de Grandin murmured. "A hairy thing, a fellow who leaps up and down like a mad monkey or a jumping-jack and wears the evening clothes? It is to think, *mes amis*."

"I'll say it is," Costello agreed. "It is to think what sort o' hooch they're servin' to th' youngsters nowadays—or mebbe they can't take it like us old vets o' th' World War—"

"Dr. Trowbridge is wanted on the 'phone, please," a maid's announcement cut his ponderous irony. "You can take it on this one, if you wish, sir. It's connected with the main line."

"This is Mrs. Comstock, doctor," a voice informed me. "Your cook told us you were at Mrs. Maitland's. Can you come to my house when you leave there? Mr. Manly my daughter's fiancéé, was hurt last night."

"Hurt last night?" I repeated.

"Yes, out by the country club."

"Very well, I'll be right over," I promised, and held out my hand to Professor de Grandin. "Sorry I have to run away," I apologized, "but another man was hurt at the club last night."

"*Pardieu*!" His little round blue eyes bored into mine. "That club, it are a most unhealthy place, *n'est-ce-pas?* May I accompany you? This other man may tell us something that we ought to know."

Young Manly's injury proved to be a gunshot wound inflicted by a small calibre weapon, and was located in the left shoulder. He was reticent concerning it, and neither de Grandin nor I felt inclined to press him insistently, for Mrs. Comstock hovered in the sick room from our entrance till the treatment was concluded.

"*Nom d'un petit porc!*" the little Frenchman muttered as we left the Comstock residence. "He is close-mouthed, that one. Almost, it would appear—pah! I talk the rot. Let us go to the morgue, *cher collègue*. You shall drive me there in your motor and tell me what it is you see. Ofttimes you gentlemen of general practice see things that we specialists cannot because we wear the blinders of our specialties, *n'est-ce-pas?*"

In the cold, uncharitable light of the city mortuary we viewed the remains of poor little Sarah Humphreys. As the newspaper had said, she was disfigured by a score or more of wounds, running, for the most part, down her shoulders and arms in a series of converging lines, and incised deeply enough to reveal the bone where skin and flesh had been shorn through in places. On throat and neck were five distinct livid patches, one some three inches in size, roughly square, the other four extending in parallel lines almost completely round her neck, terminating in deeply pitted scars, as though the talons of some predatory beast had sunk into her flesh. But the most terrifying item of the grisly sight was the poor girl's face. Repeated blows had hammered her once-pretty features to a purpled level, bits of sand and fine gravel still bedded in the cuticle told how her countenance must have been ground into the earth with terrific force. Never, since my days as emergency hospital interne, had I seen so sickening an array of injuries on a single body.

"And what is it you see, my friend?" the Frenchman asked in a low, rancous whisper. "You look, you meditate. You do think—what?"

"It's terrible," I began, but he cut me off impatiently.

"But certainly. One does not look to see the beautiful in the morgue. I ask for what you see, not for your esthetic impressions. *Parbleu!*"

"If you want to know what interests me most," I answered, "it is those wounds on her shoulder and arms. Except in degree they're exactly like those which I treated on Paul Maitland last night."

"Ah-ha?" His small blue eyes were dancing with excitement, his cat's-whiskers mustache was bristling more fiercely than ever. "Name of a little blue man! We begin to make the progress. Now"—he touched the livid patches on the dead girl's throat daintily with the tip of a well-manicured nail—"these marks, do they tell you something?"

I shook my head. "Possibly the bruise left by some sort of garrote," I hazarded. "They are too long and thick for fingerprints; besides, there's no thumb mark."

"Ha-ha." His laugh was mirthless as that of an actor in a high school play. "No thumb mark, you say? My dear sir, had there been a thumb mark I should have been all at sea. These marks are the stigmata of the truth of young Monsieur Maitland's story. When were you last at *le jardin des plantes*, the how do you say him?—zoölogical garden?"

"The zoo?" I echoed wonderingly.

"*Précisément*, the zoo, as you call him. Have you never noted how the quadrumana take hold of a thing? I tell you, *cher collègue*, it is not very much of an exaggeration to say the thumb is the difference between man and monkey. Man and the chimpanzee grasp objects with the fingers, using the thumb as a fulcrum. The gorilla, the orang-utan, the gibbon are all fools, they know not how to use their thumbs. Now see"—again he indicated the bruises on the dead girl's throat—"this large square patch, it is the mark of the heel of the hand, these circling lines, they are the fingers, and these wounds, they are nail prints. Name of an old and very wicked tom-cat! It was the truth young Maitland told. It was an ape that he met in the wood. An ape in evening clothes! What do you make of that, *hein?*"

"God knows," I answered helplessly.

"Assuredly," he nodded solemnly. "*Le bon Dieu* truly knows, but me, I am determined that I shall know, too." Abruptly he turned from the dead girl and propelled me gently toward the door by the elbow. "No more, no more now," he declared. "You have your mission of help to the sick to perform; I also have some work to do. If you will take me to police headquarters I shall be obliged to you, and, if the imposition is not too great, may I dwell at your house while I work upon this case? You consent? Good. Until tonight, then, *au 'voir*."

It was some time after 8 o'clock that evening when he came to the house, laden with almost enough bundles to tax a motor truck. "Great Scott, professor," I exclaimed as he laid his parcels on a convenient chair and gave me a grin which sent the waxed points of his mustache shooting upward like a pair of miniature horns, "have you been buying out the town?"

"Almost," he answered as he dropped into an easy chair and lit an evil-smelling French cigarette. "I have talked much with the grocer, the druggist, the garage man and the tobacconist, and at each place I made purchases. I am, for the time, a new resident of your so charming city of Harrisonville, eager to find out about my neighbors and my new home. I have talked like a garrulous old woman, I have milled over much wordy chaff, but from it I have sifted some good meal, *grâce à Dieu!*"

He fixed me with his curiously unwinking cat-stare as he asked: "You have a Monsieur Kalmar as a neighbor, have you not?"

"Yes, I believe there's such a person here," I replied, "but I know very little about him."

"Tell me that little, if you will be so kind."

"H'm. He's lived here just about a year, and kept very much to himself. As far as I know he's made no friends and has been visited by no one but tradesmen. I understand he's a scientist of some sort and took the old Means place out on the Andover Road so he could pursue his experiments in quiet."

"One sees," de Grandin tapped his cigarette case thoughtfully. "So much I have already gathered from my

talks with the trades people. Now tell me, if you can, is this Monsieur All-Unknown a friend of the young Manly's—the gentleman whose wound from gunshot you dressed this morning?"

"Not that I know," I answered. "I've never seen them together. Manly's a queer, moody sort of chap, never has much to say to anyone. How Millicent Comstock came to fall in love with him I've no idea. He rides well and is highly thought of by her mother, but those are about the only qualifications he has as a husband that I've been able to see."

"He is very strong, that one?"

"I wouldn't know," I had to confess.

"Very well, then. Listen at me, if you please. You think de Grandin is a fool, *hein*? Perhaps yes; perhaps no. Today I do other things than talk. I go to the Comstock lady's house and reconnoiter. In an ash can I find a pair of patent leather dress shoes, very much scratched. I grease the palm of a servant and find out they belong to that Monsieur Manly. In the trash container I make further researches, and find a white-linen dress shirt with blood on it. It is torn about the cuffs and split at the shoulder, that shirt. It, too, I find, belonged to Monsieur Manly. Me, I am like the dealer in old clothes when I talk with Madame Comstock's servant. I buy that shirt and those shoes from him. Behold!"

From one of his parcels he drew forth a pair of dress shoes and a shirt and spread them for my inspection as if they were curios of priceless value. "In Paris we have ways of making the inanimate talk," he asserted as he thrust his hand into his pocket and drew out a bit of folded paper. "That shirt, those shoes, I put them through the degree of the third time, and how they talk to me. *Mordieu*, they gabble like a pair of spinsters over the tea-cups!" Opening the paper he disclosed three coarse dull-brown hairs, varying from a half inch to three inches in length.

I looked at them curiously. They might have been from a man's head, for they were too long and straight to be body-hairs, but their texture seemed too harsh for human growth. "U'm," I commented noncommittally.

"*Précisément*," he grinned. "You cannot classify them, eh?"

"No," I admitted. "They're entirely too coarse to have come from Manly's head. Besides, they're almost black; his hair is a distinct brown."

"My friend," he leaned toward me and stared unwinkingly into my face, "I have seen hairs like that before. So have you, but you did not recognize them. They are from a gorilla."

"From a gor—man, you're raving!" I jerked back. "How could a gorilla's hair get on young Manly's shirt?"

"You have the wrong preposition," he corrected. "They were not on his shirt, but *in* it. Below the neck line, where a bullet had torn through the linen and wounded him. The hairs I found embedded in the dried blood. Look at this garment, if you please"—he held the shirt before me for inspection—"behold how it is split. It has been on a body much too big for it. I tell you, Monsieur Trowbridge, that shirt was worn by the thing—the monster—which killed that pitiful girl dead on the links last night, which attacked the young Maitland a few minutes later, and—which got paint from Madame Comstock's house on these shoes when it climbed into that house last night.

"You start, you stare? You say to yourself, 'This de Grandin he is crazy like the April-fish, him!' Attend me while I prove each step in the ladder:

"This morning, while you were examining young Monsieur Manly's wound I was examining both him and his room. On his window sill I noted a few scratches—such scrapes as one who drags his legs and feet might make in clambering across the window ledge. I look out of the window, and on the white-painted side of the house I see fresh scratches in the paint. Also I find scratch-marks on the painted iron pipe that carries water from the roof in rainy weather. That pipe runs down the corner of the house near Manly's window, but too far away for a man to reach it from the sill. But if a man has arms as long as my leg, what then? Ah, then he could have made the reach most easily. Yes.

"Now, when I buy those shoes, that shirt, from Ma-

dame Comstock's servant, I note both paint and scratches on the patent leather. Later I compare the paint on the shoes with that on the house-side. They are the same.

"Also I note the shirt, how he is blood-stained and all burst-out, as though the man who wore him suddenly expanded and burst through him. I find beast-hairs in the bloodstains on the shirt. So, now, you see?"

"I'm hanged if I do," I denied.

He bent forward again, speaking with rapid earnestness: "The Comstock servant tells me more when I quiz him. He tells me, by example, that last night the young Manly was nervous, what you call ill at ease. Hé complained of headache, backache, he felt what he called rotten. Yes. He went to bed early, and his fiancée went to the country club dance without him. The old madame, she, too, went to bed early.

"Ha, but later in the night—at almost midnight—the young man went for a walk, because, he said, he could not sleep. That is what he told the servant this morning, but"—he paused impressively, then went on, spacing his words carefully—"the servant had been up all night with the toothache, and while he heard the young man come in sometime after midnight, *he did not hear him leave*, as he certainly would have done had he gone out the door.

"And now, consider this: A policeman of the motorcycle tells me he observed the young Manly coming from that Monsieur Kalmar's house, staggering like one drunk. He wonders, that policeman, if Monsieur Kalmar keeps so much to himself because he sells unlicensed liquor after the saloons are closed. What now, *cher collègue*? You say what?"

"Damn it!" I exploded. "You're piecing out the silliest nonsense story I ever heard, de Grandin. One of us is crazy as hell, and I don't think it's I!"

"Neither of us is crazy, *mon vieux*," he returned gravely, "but men have gone mad with knowing what I know, and madder yet with suspecting what I am beginning to suspect. Will you be good enough to drive me past the house of Monsieur Kalmar?"

A few minutes' run carried us to the lonely dwelling occupied by the eccentric old man whose year's residence

had been a twelve months' mystery. "He works late, that one," de Grandin commented as we drove by. "Observe, the light burns in his workshop."

Sure enough, from a window at the rear of the house a shaft of bright light cut the evening shadow, and, as we stopped the car and gazed, we could see Kalmar's bent form, swathed in a laboratory apron, passing and repassing the window. The little Frenchman looked long at the white-draped figure, as if he would imprint its image on his memory, then touched me on the elbow. "Let us go back," he ordered softly, "and as we go I shall tell you a story."

"Before the war that wrecked the world there came to Paris from Vienna one Doctor Beneckendorff. As a man he was intolerable, but as a *savant* without parallel. With my own eyes I saw him do things that in an age less tolerant of learning would have brought him to the stake as a wizard.

"But science is God's tool, my friend. It is not meant that man should play at being God. That man, he went too far. We had to put him in restraint."

"Yes?" I answered, not particularly interested in his narrative. "What did he do?"

"Ha, what did he not do, *pardieu*? Children of the poor were found missing at night. They were nowhere. The gendarmes' search narrowed to the laboratory of this Beneckendorff, and there they found not the poor missing infants, but a half-score ape-creatures, not wholly human nor completely simian, but partaking horribly of each, with fur and handlike feet, but with the face of something that had once been of mankind. They were all dead, those poor ones, fortunately for them.

"He was adjudged mad as the June-beetle by the court, but ah, my friend, what a mentality, what a fine brain gone bad!

"We shut him up for the safety of the public, and for the safety of humanity we burned his notebooks and destroyed the serums with which he had injected the human babes to turn them into pseudo-apes."

"Impossible!" I scoffed.

"Incredible," he agreed, "but not, unfortunately, im-

possible—for him. His secret entered the madhouse with him; but in the turbulence of war he escaped."

"Good God," I cried. "You mean this monster-maker is loose on the world?"

He shrugged his shoulders with Gallic fatalism. "Perhaps. All trace of him has vanished, but there are reports he was later seen in the Congo Beligique."

"But—"

"No buts, my friend, if you will be so kind. To speculate is idle. We have arrived at an *impasse*, but presently we may find our way over, under or around it. One favor, if you will be good enough to grant it: When next you attend the young Manly permit that I accompany you. I would have a few minutes' talk with Madame Comstock."

Cornelia Comstock was a lady of imposing physique and even more imposing manner. She browbeat fellow club members, society reporters, even solicitors for "causes," but to de Grandin she was merely a woman who had information he desired. Prefacing his inquiry with the sort of bow no one but a Frenchman can achieve, he began directly:

"Madame, do you, or did you ever, know one Doctor Beneckendorff?"

Mrs. Comstock gave him a look beside which the basilisk's most deadly glare would have been languishing. "My good man—" she began as if he were an overcharging taxi driver, but the Frenchman met her cold gaze with one equally frigid.

"You will be good enough to answer me," he told her. "Primarily I represent the Republic of France; but I also represent humanity. Once more, please, did you ever know a Doctor Beneckendorff?"

Her cold eyes lowered before his unwinking stare, and her thin lips twitched a little. "Yes," she answered in a voice not much more than a whisper.

"Ah. So. We make progress. When did you know him—in what circumstances? Believe me, you may speak in confidence before me and Dr. Trowbridge, but please speak frankly. The importance is great."

"I knew Otto Beneckendorff many years ago. He had

just come to this country from Europe and was teaching biology at the university near which I lived as a girl. We—we were engaged."

"And your betrothal, for what reason was it broken, please?"

I could scarcely recognize Cornelia Comstock in the woman who regarded Jules de Grandin with wondering, frightened eyes. She trembled as with a chill, and her hands played nervously with the cord of her tortoiseshell pince-nez as she replied: "He—he was impossible, sir. We had vivisectionists, even in those days—but this man seemed to torture poor, defenseless beasts for the love of it. I handed back his ring when he boasted of one of his experiments to me. He positively seemed to gloat over the memory of the poor brute's sufferings before it died."

"*Eh bien, Madame,*" de Grandin shot me a quick glance, "your betrothal, then, was broken. He left you, one assumes, but did he leave in friendship?"

Cornelia Comstock looked as if she were upon the verge of fainting as she whispered, "No, sir. No! He left me with a dreadful threat. I recall his very words—how can I ever forget them? He said, 'I go, but I return. Nothing but death can cheat me, and when I come back I shall bring on you and yours a horror such as no man has known since the days before Adam.'"

"*Parbleu,*" the little Frenchman almost danced in his excitement. "We have the key to the mystery, almost, Friend Trowbridge!" To Mrs. Comstock he added, "One more little, so small question, if you please, Madame: your daughter is betrothed to one Monsieur Manly. Tell me, when and where did she meet this young man?"

"I introduced them," Mrs. Comstock's hauteur showed signs of return. "Mr. Manly came to my husband with letters of introduction from an old schoolmate of his—a fellow student at the university—in Capetown."

"Capetown, do you say, Madame? Capetown in South Africa? *Nom d'un petit bonhomme!* When was this, if you please?"

"About a year ago. Why—"

"And Monsieur Manly, he has lived with you how

long?" his question shut off her offended protest half uttered.

"Mr. Manly is *stopping* with us," Mrs. Comstock answered icily. "He is to marry my daughter next month. And, really, sir, I fail to see what interest the Republic of France, which you represent, and humanity, which you also claim to represent, can have in my private affairs. If—"

"This Capetown friend," the little Frenchman interrupted feverishly. "His name was what, and his business?"

"Really, I must decline—"

"*Tell me!*" he thrust forth both his slender hands as if to shake an answer from her. "It is that I must know. *Nom d'un fusil!* Tell me, at once!"

"We do not know his street and number," Mrs. Comstock seemed completely cowed, "but his name is Alexander Findlay, and he's a diamond factor."

"*Bien.*" The Frenchman struck his heels together and bowed as if hinged at the hips. "Thank you, Madame. You have been most kind and helpful."

It was past midnight when the 'phone began to ring insistently. "Western Union speaking," a girl's voice announced. "Cablegram for Dr. Jules de Grandin. Ready?"

"Yes," I answered, seizing pencil and pad from the bedside table, "Read it please."

"'No person named Alexander Findlay diamond factor known here no record of such person in last five years. Signed, Burlingame, Inspector of Police.'"

"It's from Capetown, South Africa," she added as I finished jotting down her dictation.

"Very good," I answered. "Forward a typed confirmation, please."

"*Mille tonneres!*" de Grandin exclaimed as I read the message to him. "This makes the picture-puzzle complete, or very nearly so. Attend me, if you please."

He leaped across the room and extracted a black-leather notebook from his jacket pocket. "Behold," he consulted a notation, "this Monsieur Kalmar whom no one knows, he has lived here for ten months and twenty-six days—twenty-seven when tomorrow morning comes. This informa-

tion I have from a realtor whom I interviewed in my rôle as compiler of a directory of scientists.

"The young Monsieur Manly, he has known the Comstocks for 'about a year.' He brought them letters from a schoolmate of Monsieur Comstock who proves to be unknown in Capetown. *Parbleau*, my friend, from now on Jules de Grandin turns night into day, if you will be so kind as to take him to a gun merchant from whom he may procure a Winchester rifle. Yes," he nodded solemnly, "it is so. *Vraiment*."

Time drifted by, de Grandin going gun in hand each night to keep his lonely vigils, but no developments in the mystery of the Humphreys murder or the attack on Paul Maitland were reported. The date of Millicent Comstock's wedding approached, and the big house was filled to overflowing with boisterous young folks; still de Grandin kept up his lonely patrols—and kept his own counsel.

The night before the wedding day he accosted me as he came down the stairs. "Trowbridge, my friend, you have been most patient with me. If you will come with me tonight I think that I may show you something."

"All right," I agreed. "I haven't the slightest notion what all this folderol's about, but I'm willing to be convinced."

A little after twelve we parked the car at a convenient corner and walked quickly to the Comstock place, taking shelter in the shadow of a hedge that marked the boundary of the lawn.

"Lord, what a lovely night!" I exclaimed. "I don't think I remember ever seeing brighter moonlight—"

"*H'm'm'm'm!*" His interruption was one of those peculiar nasal sounds, half grunt, half whinny, which none but the true Frenchman can produce. "Attend me, if you please, my friend: no man knows what part Tanit the Moon Goddess plays in our affairs, even today when her name is forgotten by all but dusty-dry antiquaries. This we do know, however; at the entrance of life our appearance is governed by the phases of the moon. You, as a physician with wide obstetrical experience, can confirm

that. Also, when the time of exit approaches, the crisis of disease is often governed by the moon's phase. Why this should be we do not know, but that it is so we know all too well. Suppose, then, the cellular organization of a body be violently, unnaturally, changed, and nature's whole force be exerted toward a readjustment. May we not suppose that Tanit who affects childbirth and death, might have some force to apply in such a case?"

"I dare say," I conceded, "but I don't follow you. Just what is it you expect, or suspect, de Grandin?"

"*Hélas*, nothing," he answered. "I suspect nothing, I affirm nothing, I deny nothing. I am agnostic, but also hopeful. It may be that I make a great black *lutin* of my own shadow, but he who is prepared for the worst is most agreeably disappointed if the best occurs." Irrelevantly he added, "That light yonder, it shines from Mademoiselle Millicent's chamber, *n'est-ce-pas?*"

"Yes," I confirmed, wondering if I were on a fool's errand with an amiable lunatic for company.

The merrymaking in the house had quieted, and one by one the lights went out in the upper windows. I had an almost overwhelming desire to smoke, but dared not strike a match. The little Frenchman fidgeted nervously, fussing with the lock of his Winchester, ejecting and reinserting cartridges, playing a devil's tattoo on the barrel with his long white fingers.

A wrack of clouds had crept across the moon, but suddenly it swept away, and like a floodlight turned on the scene the bright, pearly moonlight deluged everything. "Ah," my companion murmured, "now we shall see what we shall see—perhaps."

As if his words had been a cue there echoed from the house a scream of such wild, frenzied terror as a lost soul might emit when summoned to eternal torment. "Ah-ha?" de Grandin exclaimed as he raised his rifle. "Will he come forth or—"

Lights flashed inside the house. The patter of terrified feet sounded among the babel of wondering, questioning voices, but the scream was not repeated.

"Come forth, accursèd one—come forth and face de

Grandin!" I heard the small Frenchman mutter, then "Behold, my friend, he comes—*le gorille!*"

From Millicent's window, horrible as a devil out of lowest hell, there came a hairy head set low upon a pair of shoulders at least four feet across. An arm which somehow reminded me of a giant snake slipped past the window casing, grasped the cast-iron downspout at the corner of the house, and drew a thickset, hairy body after it. A leg tipped with a handlike foot was thrown across the sill, and, like a spider from its lair, the monster leaped from the window and hung a moment to the iron pipe, its sable body silhouetted against the white wall of the house.

But what was that, that white-robed thing which hung pendant from the grasp of the beast's free arm? Like a beautiful white moth inert in the grasp of the spider, her fair hair unbound, her silken night robe rent into a motly of tatters, Millicent Comstock lay senseless in the creature's grasp.

"Shoot, man, shoot!" I screamed, but only a thin whisper came from my fear-stiffened lips.

"Silence, *imbécile!*" de Grandin ordered as he pressed his cheek against his gunstock. "Would you give warning of our ambushade?"

Slowly, so slowly it seemed an hour was consumed in the process, the great primate descended the water-pipe, leaping the last fifteen feet of the descent and crouching on the moonlit lawn, its small red eyes glaring malignantly, as if it challenged the world for possession of its prey.

The bellow of de Grandin's rifle almost deafened me, and the smokeless powder's flash burned a gash in the night. He threw the loading mechanism feverishly, and fired a second time.

The monster staggered drunkenly against the house at the first shot sounded. At the second it dropped Millicent to the lawn and uttered a cry which was part roar, part snarl. Then, one of its great arms trailing helplessly, it leaped toward the rear of the house in a series of long, awkward bounds which reminded me, absurdly, of the bouncing of a huge inflated ball.

"Attend her, if you please, my friend," de Grandin

ordered as we reached Millicent's inert form. "I shall make *Monsieur le Gorille* my personal business!"

I bent above the senseless girl and put my ear to her breast. Faint but perceptible, I made out a heart-beat, and lifted her in my arms.

"Dr. Trowbridge!" Mrs. Comstock, followed by a throng of frightened guests, met me at the front door. "What's happened? Good heavens, Millicent!" Seizing her daughter's flaccid hand in both her own she burst into a flood of tears. "Oh, what's happened? What is it?"

"Help me get Millicent to bed, then get some smelling salts and brandy," I commanded, ignoring her questions.

A little later, with restoratives applied and electric pads at her feet and back, the girl showed signs of waking. "Get out—all of you!" I ordered. Hysterical women, especially patients' mothers, are rather less than useless when consciousness returns after profound shock.

"Oh—oh, the ape-thing! The dreadful ape-thing!" cried Millicent in a small, childish whimper. "It's got me—help—"

"It's all right, dear," I comforted. "You're safe, safe home in your own bed, with old Dr. Trowbridge standing by." It was not till several hours later that I realized her first waking exclamation had been almost identical to Paul Maitland's when he revived from his faint.

"Dr. Trowbridge," Mrs. Comstock whispered from the bedroom door. "We've looked all over, but there's no sign of Mr. Manly. Do—do you suppose anything could have happened to him?"

"I think it quite likely that something could—and did," I answered curtly, turning from her to smooth her daughter's fluttering hand.

"*Par le barbe d'un bouc vert!*" de Grandin exclaimed as, disheveled, but with a light of exhilaration in his eyes, he met me in the Comstock hall some two hours later. "Madame Comstock, you are to be congratulated. But for my so brave colleague Dr. Trowbridge and my own so

very clever self your charming daughter would have shared the fate of the poor Sarah Humphreys.

"Trowbridge, *mon vieux*, I have not been quite frank with you. I have not told you all. But this thing, it was so incredible, so seemingly impossible, that you would not have believed. *Parbleu*, I do not quite believe it myself, even though I know that it is so!

"Let us recapitulate: When this *sacré* Beneckendorff was in the madhouse he raved continually that his confinement cheated him of his revenge—the revenge he had so long planned against one Madame Cornélie Comstock of America.

"We French are logical, not like you English and Americans. We write down and keep for reference even what a madman says. Why not? It may be useful some day, who knows?

"Now, Friend Trowbridge, some time ago I told you this Beneckendorff was reported in the Congo Belgique. Yes? But I did not tell you he were reported in charge of a young, half-grown gorilla. No.

"When this so unfortunate Mademoiselle Humphreys is killed in that so terrible manner I remember my own African experiences, and I say to me, 'Ah-ha, Jules de Grandin, it look as if *Monsieur le Gorille* has had a finger in this pie.' And thereupon I ask to know if any such have escape from a circus or zoo nearby. All answers are no.

"Then that Sergeant Costello, he bring me to this so splendid *savant*, Dr. Trowbridge, and with him I go to interview the young Monsieur Maitland who have encountered much strangeness where the young Humphreys girl met death.

"And what does the young Maitland tell me? He tells of something that have hair, that jump up and down like an enraged ape and that act like a gorilla, but wears man's evening clothes, *parbleu!* It is to think. No gorilla have escaped yet what *seems* like a gorilla—in gentleman's evening clothes, *mordieu!*—have been encountered on the golf links.

"Thereupon I search my memory. I remember that madman and the poor infants he has turned into half-ape things by administration of his so vile serums. I say to

me, "If he can turn man-children into monkey-things, for why can he not turn ape-things into men-things. *Hein?*"

"Then I find one Dr. Kalmar who has lived here for a year, almost, and of whom no one knows anything. I search about, I make the inquiries, and learn one man has been seen coming to and from this place in secret. Also, in this same man's discarded shirt I find the hairs of a gorilla. *Morbleu!* I think some more, and what I think is not particularly pleasant.

"I reason: suppose this serum which may make a man-thing of an ape-thing is not permanent in its effect? What then? If it is not renewed at stated intervals the man becomes an ape again. You follow? *Bien.*

"Now, the other day I learn something which gives me to think some more. This Beneckendorff, he raves against one Madame Comstock. You, Madame, admit you once knew him. He had loved you as he understood love. Now he hated you as only he could hate. Is it not against you he plans this devilish scheme? I think it quite possible.

"And so I send a cablegram—never mind to whom, Dr. Trowbridge knows that—and I get the answer I expect and fear. The man in whose shirt I find those hairs of the gorilla is no man at all, he is one terrible masquerade of a man. So. Now, I reason, 'Suppose this masquerading monkey-thing do not get his serum as expected, what will he do?' I fear to answer my own question, but I make myself do so: *Voilà*, I buy me a rifle.

"This gun has bullets of soft lead, and I made them even more effective by cutting a V-shaped notch in each of their heads. When they strike something they spread out and make a nobly deadly wound.

"Tonight what I have feared, but yet expected, comes to pass. *Ha*, but I am ready, me! I shoot, and each time I shoot my bullet tears a great hole in the ape-thing. He drops his prey and seeks the only shelter that his little ape-brain knows, the house of Dr. Kalmar. Yes.

"I follow all quickly, and reach the house almost as soon as he. He is maddened with the pain of my bullets, and in his rage he tears this so vile Kalmar into little bits, even as he has done to poor young Sarah Humphreys.

And I, arriving with my gun, dispatch him with another shot. *C'est une affaire finie.*

"But before I come back here I recognize the corpse of this Dr. Kalmar. Who is he? Who but the escaped lunatic, the monster-maker, the entirely detestable Dr. Otto Beneckendorff? Before I leave I destroy the devil's brews with which he makes monkeys of men and men of monkeys. It is far better that their secret be forever lost.

"I think Mademoiselle Humphreys was unfortunate enough to meet this ape-man when he was on his way to Dr. Kalmar's, as he had been taught to come. As a man, perhaps, he did not know this Kalmar, or, as we know him, Beneckendorff; but as a brute he knew no other man but Beneckendorff—his master, the man who brought him from Africa.

"When he came upon the poor girl on the golf links she screamed in terror, and at once his savageness became uppermost. Believe me, the gorilla is more savage than the bear, the lion or the tiger. Therefore, in his anger, he tear her to pieces. He also tried to tear the young Monsieur Maitland, but luckily for us he failed, and so we got the story which put us on his trail.

"*Voilà.* It is finished. Anon I shall report to the good Sergeant Costello and show him the bodies at the Kalmar house. Also I shall cable back to Paris. The ministry of health will be glad to know that Beneckendorff is no more."

"But, Monsieur de Grandin," Mrs. Comstock demanded, "who was this man—or ape—you killed?"

I held my breath as he fixed his cold stare on her, then sighed with relief as he answered. "I can not say, Madame."

"Well," Mrs. Comstock's natural disputatiousness came to the surface, "I think it's very *queer*—"

His laugh was positively Olympian. "*You* think it very queer, Madame? *Mort d'un rat mort*, as Balkis said of Solomon's magnificence, the half has not been told you!"

"When the police look for Monsieur Manly—*mon dieu*, what a name for an ape-thing!—they will be puzzled," he told me as we walked to my car. "I must warn

Costello to enter his disappearance as a permanently unsolved case. No one will ever know the true facts but you, I and the ministry of health, Friend Trowbridge. The public would not believe, even if we told them."





...a later character, a figure vivid and engaging, crisply drawn, who perched splendidly at the interface between the supernatural and the real. There all was possible, and most of it (in the high tradition of Carnacki) could be handled by practical knowledge and common sense, liberally seasoned with violence. His name was Jules de Grandin, the most successful and the most beguiling of the occult detectives.

8—

Curious it is, *n'est-ce-pas*, the psychic investigator's life? Not so normally does he live. *Parbleu!* In his nights, he must himself accustom to the undead drifting at the window, their dry mouths wide, scraping the screen. Yet some, they, those creatures, come by the good sun also. *Dieu et le diable*.

By day, *mon ami*, regard you that lovely red-headed girl, all smiles. But yet, her shining eyes, stone dead they are, like stones so polished, smiling you to the heart. Ah, thinks she, tonight that throat I bite away and tear the bloody heart.

Fifteen thousand blue turkeys! Even one so clever as Jules de Grandin, even he, that extraordinary one, must wonder why flock these naughty fellows here. To Harrisonville, New Jersey of the United States. The town she is with monsters crammed, *le bon Dieu* knows why.

1925 it is. *Predicament*. The Prohibition, it raises a great thirst in honest throats. The good people of the town, so dry they are, at every party the whisky she pours out. The soul opens. The monsters, may they not then rush in?

Regardez, s'il vous plait. Of a certainty, Prohibition brings out those so panting demons, these dry mummies to stalk the streets, these unrepentant children of Hell so deep and hot. *Morbleu!* Strange things walk. Most surely, in Jules de Grandin, they meet their match. *Mort d'un chat!*

How they fall before him. How he sweeps them away, goblin and voodoo queen, the witch, the walking dead, the so-leering Hindu, the dead woman's curse. May the Devil roast me in flaming sauce, if I put not a stop to them.

Hélas! They tremble at Jules de Grandin, the very much so clever fellow. Tonight we tweak the Devil's nose and catch him in his lair, and if he struggle, then with one mighty damn thrust, we hurl him to Hell, his home. *C'est une affaire finie.*

It is thirsty work, *mon enfant*, even for so fine a fellow as Jules de Grandin. Pour forth the brandy. Let us leave no bottle full.

Harrisonville, New Jersey, about 1925. To this town, few enough miles from New York City, came Professor Jules de Grandin of the Paris Police, the University of Paris, and the St. Lazaire Hospital, a distinguished physician and surgeon, and the possessor of extensive erudition in fields occult, mystic and magical.

He is a tiny man, slender as a woman, with the stamina of a dock-walloper. He is that rare fellow, a blond Frenchman, wearing a mustache waxed to needle tips, wheat-blond in color, which contrasts markedly with his slim black eyebrows. His eyes are round, light-blue, icily direct, penetrating as the crisp mind watching behind a haze of school book French. His skin is pale. His chin is small, rather sharp. Being French, he is, of course, excitable, and is given to storms of rage in which French and English oaths mingle wonderfully. Before one of these spasms hits, his voice becomes low and flat. After which he flares incandescent.

He will drink anything but seems to prefer brandy. He will smoke anything, stinking French cigarettes when he can find them, cigars when he cannot. He is a skilled cook. And he is also an accomplished glutton whose eye moistens at the sight of an apple pie or a particularly sugary fruit compote. Truthfully, his sweet tooth prevents him from being a gourmet. He appreciates fine food; however, he equally appreciates any food, particularly roast duck.

His English is spoken almost without accent, although with severe diction disorders. American slang puzzles and fascinates him. Almost, one might say, it does capture of him his goat.

De Grandin appeared in ninety-two short stories and a single novel, written by Seabury Quinn and published in *Weird Tales* from October 1925 to September 1951, with approximately a three-year break from 1939 to 1942.¹⁰ A limited number of his cases have been reprinted in anthologies, such digest magazines as *Startling Mystery Stories* and the *Magazine of Horror*, and the 1966 collection *The Phantom Fighter*, which contains ten stories lightly updated. In 1976, a series of paperbacks was issued reprinting thirty-two short stories and the novel, *The Devil's Bride*.¹¹

The author, Seabury Grandin Quinn (1899-1969), was trained as a lawyer and admitted to the District of Columbia bar. Following service in World War I, he became editor of trade journals in New York City. Among these was *Casket and Sunnyside*, the funeral directors' journal, and it was

because of this association that he was later believed to have been a mortician. Not so.

He taught medical jurisprudence—Thorndyke's field—and wrote both technical articles and popular fiction. He appeared in the *Detective Story Magazine* (1918) and *Thrill Book* (1919). In October 1923, came his first appearance in *Weird Tales*, his major market from that point on. His appearances in *Weird Tales* exceed all other authors, totalling 149 stories and 13 articles.¹²

In 1937, Quinn returned to Washington to practice law—first as a lawyer for a trade magazine group, later as a lawyer for the government until after World War II. After a series of strokes during the 1950s, he went into semi-retirement, continued to write on a lesser scale, and died 1969.

Quinn had thoroughly assimilated the lessons of earlier supernatural fiction. The structures of that fiction show dimly in the de Grandin stories, as old walls show under vines. Here appear remnants of Blackwood's story-building techniques as altered by Hodgson—the pitiful victim's cry for aid; the menace of forces past normal experience; the ghost breaker who strikes first at a symptom, then stands face to face with raw power. There the story climaxes, as you may recall, to be concluded by anticlimax as the hero explains all and the real world reasserts itself.

In telling his stories, Quinn abandoned the bulk of the English ghost story technique—that methodical development of atmosphere which was intended to glide you effortlessly from the real to the unreal. That technique used richly ornamented prose and consciously literary devices; and, often, a narrative movement so gradual that it barely twitched.

Quinn's stories are built for rapid movement. The prose is decently pruned, all considering, although it does not display the staccato chatter of later pulps. The length of the story is significantly shortened to fit the *Weird Tales* format. The openings flash to immediate flame. The action hurries. No time to generate a sense of accumulating evil. Begin the evil in full stride. Plunge into the hot heart of the story. Instantly engage death, fear, horror, death.

And now, into this foaming Hell comes the so-clever de Grandin in full cry, mustaches bristling, very French. He will strike and strike again until it is all over.

As was the convention of their time, Blackwood, E.F. Benson and others spent numerous pages seducing the reader from reality to acceptance of the story's central improbability. Like other seductions, this is an extended process.

Most of Quinn's stories begin approximately where Blackwood climaxed. The *Weird Tales* stories required that the reader immediately suspend his skepticism. At the beginning of the adventure, the improbabilities are fully developed and active. Mummies and ghouls are at stage center, already performing. No time is squandered in preparing the reader: This is the way things are. Up and away. The characters of the story may disbelieve; the reader may not.

Acceptance of the premise permits a fast-flowing narrative. Emphasis

falls on action, movement, conflict, studded by startling scenes.

For all this, a negative price is exacted. Narrative speed diminishes character development and emotional richness. (Master writers may do both, but there are few enough of these.) Instead, easily assimilated information is provided—obvious character traits, readily recognized nuggets of sentimentality, over-simplified emotional responses, shallow and incredible.

Action has become the chief character, and even the hero is little more than an interesting decoration.

The de Grandin stories are certainly action oriented. They contain no real character development from one end to the other. In the final story, the characters remain much as they began. This does not necessarily imply a fault. The characters are warm and interesting. We enjoy them. But they do not grow.

Most major characters appear in the initial story, "The Horror of the Links" (*Weird Tales*, October 1925). (Since all stories first appeared in *Weird Tales*, the magazine citation will be omitted in subsequent references.)

Dr. de Grandin has arrived in Harrisonville to study American police methods—or some similar feeble reason. Detective Sergeant Costello, the police official of the series, introduces him to Dr. Samuel Trowbridge, de Grandin's future Watson and series narrator.

The three look into the brutal slaughter of a young girl out on the golf links. A dangerous locale: There, a young man has just escaped mauling by what appears to be an ape in evening clothes. With that report, your attention is firmly fixed and the story darts along. The horrors are rather obvious today but they come at you from unanticipated angles, never quite in the way you might suppose. De Grandin is very French. Costello and Trowbridge are appropriately thick. And the case ends in a blaze of gunfire, as the night fiend is shot and his demented creator (a mad German) is ripped from this life.

After which, in the good old style, de Grandin explains to his dazed friends what has been going on, while they slump numbly, punishing the whiskey.

As you have detected, the characters fill those pigeon holes immortalized by Conan Doyle: Costello satisfies the Lestrade requirement; Trowbridge matches Dr. Watson; Nora McGinnis (Trowbridge's housekeeper) fills in for Mrs. Hudson. And the great detective, himself? Well, while de Grandin fills Holmes' slot, he is far far closer to Hercule Poirot, who had already appeared in two novels (1920 and 1923), a 1924 short story series in the *Blue Book Magazine*, and a collection of short stories issued the same year.

De Grandin shares the natty little Belgian's perception and intelligence, his conceit, his fondness for food and sweets, his professional background (although this is dramatically fattened), his love of secrecy, his assumed foreignness to disarm opponents, his mustaches (thinner than Poirot's), and his amazing predilection for peppering his speech with foreign ejaculations.

Regardless . . . De Grandin works nicely as an individual. He is his own man, more intense, more violent than Poirot, certainly a master of arts far darker than any Poirot would acknowledge. Under de Grandin's gloss of easy heroism, you note a few shadows and shades startling in a pulp magazine character. Or startling, at least, to those who don't read the magazines.

After "Links," the series leaps to France. De Grandin and Trowbridge meet there by chance and together investigate a chateau where the last six renters have died violently. ("The Tenants of Broussac," December 1925). Rich Oklahomans have rented the chateau. Already their beautiful daughter's body is wrapped in sinister, spiraling bruises.

Name of a little green man, it is all caused by a tremendous green-gold snake with blue eyes, containing the spiritual essence of a former Broussac, deceased these many centuries. De Grandin seizes a sword and slices up that ancient evil into fourteen pieces, thus inhibiting all further activities, let it be known.

"The Isle of Missing Ships" (February 1926) is a furious adventure. De Grandin is employed by Lloyds of London to discover why so many ships are vanishing, finds a nest of ship-wrecking pirates, and fights his way through sharks, criminals, an exquisitely furnished villa in the bowels of a cliff, and a gigantic octopus, in that order. The activities end with a fairly comprehensive machine-gunning of the criminals, and well they deserved it.

After the excitement, Trowbridge returns home, while de Grandin moves on to Brazil and another case. After a long absence, he drops in to see Trowbridge one stormy night. Immediately, they are immersed in "The Vengeance of India" (April 1926). Evil "Hindoos" have hypnotized a girl into a death-like trance and so she is buried and so, at their bidding, she walks by night. All this is to get revenge on the family. But de Grandin de-hypnotizes her and the Hindoos get theirs to general satisfaction. De Grandin ends the story by getting as tight as rubber gloves; it is the first time but not the last.

In "The Dead Hand" (May 1926), another hypnotizer has enchanted a woman's severed hand. It flies about, quite indifferent to gravity, committing atrocities, until de Grandin puts an end to it.

By this time de Grandin has settled in as Trowbridge's permanent guest. While retaining French citizenship, he remains inexplicably an expatriate—at least until the Second World War.

His extended stay in Harrisonville is initially a result of the rich fees he gleans. In "The White Lady of the Orphanage" (September 1927), he mentions that he will return to France next month with the \$50,000 he has earned. But the return is delayed, then deferred, then forgotten. If he strays away for brief vacations in France, his residence remains firmly at 993 Susquehanna Ave., Harrisonville, New Jersey.

It may be that France reminds him too keenly of his own true lost love, sweet Heloise, with whom he walked hand in hand by the Loire, these many years past. Religious differences separated them. She went to a convent. He

became a Professor of Medicine, "one of the foremost anatomists and physiologists of his generation." In 1910 he became a member of *la faculté de médecine légale*. World War I lifts him from the University to a life of action. But he never ceases to mourn his lost love—particularly when he gets tight, which is frequently.

Immediately after the war he began working for French Intelligence. He traveled extensively in Africa and Asia. We surmise that it was during this period he assimilated his immense fund of occult and supernatural lore. What began as a hobby soon became the primary interest of his life.

He did not find it necessary to ransack the world for adventure. You could find as much adventure as a man could stand in Harrisonville, the unique town. You wonder how Trowbridge could keep up his medical practice. After the arrival of de Grandin, no one got any sleep.

As the series opens, Trowbridge is about fifty. He is rather stout, a Republican, an Episcopal, a stable member of Harrisonville's upper class. He wears a pince-nez, enjoys a cigar and a drink, Prohibition or not.

Whether he wears a beard is uncertain. In the September 1937 issue of *Weird Tales*, artist Virgil Finley illustrated him with admirable whiskers. The drawing was so right that you feel it could not be otherwise. He is, of course, older than de Grandin, as is proper.¹³

While well versed in his profession, he shows a startling inability to learn from experience. If once a man has seen vampires, zombies, werewolves and poltergeists in full cry, then, we may ask with some irritation, why should he hem and haw about recognizing them again.

Part of that sluggish comprehension, we must chalk up to the hazard of Watsoning. The rest—well, explain it away as the traditional inability of a senior specialist to accept instances of wildly divergent reality. A man who has functioned for fifty years in a world of predictable natural law can surely be excused if he resists belief in murderous mummies or mobile stone statues.

Despite slow comprehension, despite a smothering air of respectability, Trowbridge is an adventurer at heart. He will accompany de Grandin anywhere, into many a horrid rat's nest. Consistently he faces forces against which a pistol is no defense at all.

They are, you see, strong, essentially inseparable friends: The flame and the stone—one whirling, light, eager; the other ponderously solid. It is recorded that Holmes and Watson rasped each other's nerves, and it is true that de Grandin often annoys Trowbridge. Not only does this clever little fellow positively fall over himself to attribute supernormal causes to insignificant events, but he talks incessantly. At solemn occasions, burials, weddings, insurance meetings, the words flow from his lips, a habit that profoundly annoys Trowbridge. He prefers silent solemnity.

For his part, de Grandin flares to passionate rage at Trowbridge's inability to comprehend the evidence before his eyes. De Grandin registers it all in a glance, has tabulated, summarized, understood, and projected a plan of action, while Trowbridge is still methodically adjusting his glasses.

It galls de Grandin! His temper flares. He lashes out. Then, starting, he

pounces upon himself, takes his emotions in hand, settles down to explain matters simply to Trowbridge's skeptical mind.

Yet they are friends and respect each other. There have been more peculiar partnerships.

Similar strong ties bind de Grandin and red-headed Detective Sergeant Jeremiah Costello. He will follow his little Frenchman whenever, wherever. And bring along half the police department. Costello is a huge-framed, iron Irishman, oddly graceful in spite of his massiveness. He speaks a travesty of Irish dialect, an unfortunate characteristic of the series. (It is filled with ethnic types and every single one of them speaks dense dialect.) In early stories, Costello is guilty of chewing tobacco, an evil habit learned, perhaps, while at combat in the Philippines.

He is not nearly as phlegmatic and unimaginative as Trowbridge makes him out to be. Certainly he is no stickler for the letter of the law. His interpretation of justice is wonderfully flexible. He assists de Grandin in the commission of several murders and winks at several more. All are justified of course.

Both Costello and de Grandin practice frontier justice—immediate and final punishment. What other kind would apply? What court would try an individual on a charge of vampirism or lock up a sorcerer who has unleashed familiars onto the world?

In these cases, de Grandin is judge, jury and executioner in the best tradition of The Three Just Men. De Grandin is a full-fledged justice figure, punishing those that the law cannot touch. This is a consistent theme. During the 1930s, when every second magazine featured a unilateral justice figure, de Grandin's behavior passed unnoticed. But it was relatively unusual behavior for the 1920s. De Grandin was merrily executing away while other heroes were going all prickly at the sight of weapons.

Three minor characters provide support throughout the series. Coroner Martin makes a number of appearances. He is a professional's professional in the delicate art of restoring mangled victims and neatly stitching wounds. Coroner's Physician Parnell (described by de Grandin as "an old woman in pants") appears more frequently and regards our hero warily.

Nora McGinnis is the most important of the three. Her magic touch conjured up twenty-six years of meals, at least half on an instant's notice. De Grandin was the only man she permitted in her kitchen, and the savory steam of her art still sends you groping from the magazine to the refrigerator's icy bounty.

A series lasting from 1925 to 1951 has powerful vitality. In part this stemmed from the striking variety of menaces faced by de Grandin and the strikingly original methods he uses to put an end to them. To this action is cunningly added a pinch—even as much as a handful—of bright-red sex, licit and illicit, together with certain oddiments of behavior that would not be out of place in a 1935 *Terror Tales*.

Quinn rather carefully varies his stories. Only rarely do similar menaces follow consecutively. Stories of adventure alternate with supernatural manifestations. Although all stories contain outre elements,

the variety is consistent.

Traditional themes receive untraditional treatment. Quinn's great strength lies in his ability at variations. The traditionalist may be annoyed at his cavalier flouting of conventions, but the story is always the better for it. Quinn's werewolves may be killed without a silver bullet. At least one of his vampires returns more for love than blood. Destruction is not always the motivation of the possessing spirits.

Not only do these entities vary from the usual, but de Grandin is inexhaustably resourceful in contriving their doom.

His success depends largely on the fact that the manifestations express themselves physically. They form as material in a material world, susceptible to physical countermeasures. There are no dim Usheresque ambiguities here.

At this point, Quinn differs most distinctly from earlier writers. His basic assumption is that all manifestations are subject to natural law:

de Grandin: "I do declare, we have never seen that which I call supernatural." Nature (he declares) possesses endless possibilities; man has tabulated few enough of these. "If it is beyond experience, it is still within natural experience." (from "The Poltergeist," October 1927)

These remarks are so seductive to contemporary ears it is difficult to see that they are as evasive as the statement that the "supernatural" contains unknowable elements. Both breads are from the same flour.

In the practice of his cases, however, de Grandin amply proves his philosophy. He is perhaps the first man ever to electrocute a ghost ("The Jest of Warburg Tantavul"), kill a werewolf with a conventional shotgun ("The Blood-Flower"), gut a ghoul with a knife ("Children of Ubasti"), or destroy an evil intelligence with a sledge-hammer ("The Silver Countess").

These deeds are violent and direct. But they are most thoroughly effective.

The stories, themselves, can be separated into two loose groups. First are stories of supernatural entities, a rather slovenly category including ghosts, water demons, running mummies, hungry zombies and all their brotherhood. Second are stories of strange adventure, often featuring vengeance-crazed Hindus or insane surgeons; these violate few natural laws, other than those of probability.

To review even a portion of the fiction, or even to select typical cases, is difficult. Each has at least a single unique event demanding comment. The following remarks are offered with due apologies, understanding in advance that all the reader's favorite stories have been omitted.

"The Blood Flower" (March 1927) is a fine werewolf story. Trowbridge and de Grandin are summoned to medicate a woman who howls at night. Seems that she has become infected with lycanthrophy, not by a bite but contact with dried flowers from Rumania, that sinister place. Her transformation is not into any decent-looking wolf. Rather, the change shapes her (and others similarly afflicted) into a creature closely resembling Lon Chaney when the wolfbane blooms.

De Grandin settles the leader of the pack, the male werewolf, by emptying a heavy automatic into him. No silver bullets are required: "I did shoot a hole in him large enough for him to have walked through."

To cure the woman, he places her at the center of a mystic circle and conducts rites and purifications and such with hyssop, prayers and a magic brew, the formula of which is given, in the event that you, too, must cast out demons.

"Restless Souls" (October 1928) is a surprisingly gentle vampire story. It is also a Halloween story, complete with walking corpses. A young girl, become a vampire, returns to find the love she died before experiencing. Her blood thirst is almost incidental. (De Grandin is of the opinion, by the way, that vampirism is caused by a virus transmitted during the blood-sucking process.) Being a vampire, she must die; but before he drives home the stake, de Grandin gives her a large shot of opiate to dull the impending pain.

"The Curse of the House of Phipps" (January 1930) is a fine powerful curse, indeed, killing all male Phipps before they see their first born. The curse was set by a young girl, brutally murdered by a long-ago Phipps. The case includes one of those Carnacki interludes where criminals haunt a house to conceal their presence, an idea old when Nick Carter used it. These criminals fare less well than usual, since de Grandin pistols down the first white sheet he sees in the inimitable style of shooting first and looking later. Eventually he gets around to breaking the curse, done rationally enough by burying the poor girl's skeleton properly.

"The Druid's Shadow" (October 1930) contains a popularized hash of Jung's less accessible psychological theories. The idea is that ancestral memories may be activated in the presence of emotionally-saturated relics of yesteryear. Which is a far cry from Jung. Nevertheless, memories of a former Druid rite grip a father-in-law and his son's wife, and he also carves her up before de Grandin gets control of the situation.

The evil relics are, in this story, destroyed by fire. This is a customary device. Quinn uses fire to purify as frequently as de Grandin hypnotizes people to forget, forget, forget for all time what they have just been through. That may not be current science, but it worked in *Weird Tales*.

"The Mansion of Unholy Magic" (October 1933) is an entirely satisfying adventure. Crazy Col. Putnam has animated three mummies. These are charging about the countryside, way back in the sticks, gulping the blood of all they catch. And not a word of this gets into the newspapers.

De Grandin, Trowbridge, and a girl taxi driver spend the night cooped up inside a hunting lodge, while the withered fiends chitter and scrape outside, kept from entering only because de Grandin has arranged knives before the door. The pointed steel (another repetitive plot device) keeps them out. The magical protection saves de Grandin's party, although, elsewhere, the girl's father is killed by a mummy.

The following night, the three head toward Col. Putnam's dire mansion, vengeance in their hearts. De Grandin is armed with a pragmatic scythe. Using this, he chops up one attacking mummy, firing the remains. But during this activity, the girl is abducted.

They find her within the mansion, hypnotized and dressed in filmy scraps, groveling before a woman and a huge man. Both these are mummies restored to their former appearances. Both prove flammable.

Up from her shameful trance rises the girl. While the male mummy was still functioning, he had stripped her bare. But instead of clothing herself decently, as any taxi driver would do, she snatches up the scythe and proceeds to chop Col. Putnam into large, irregular chunks. Trowbridge is rather astonished by all this. De Grandin is gleeful and fills the air with French cries of support. Afterward he burns the mansion to conceal the crime.

A justice figure in the fine tradition.

The adventure stories in this series contain a considerable charge of sadistic elements. Not only is there much shooting down of the evil minions—only to be expected—but there are rich jungles of such less routine material as surgical mutilation, erotic beatings, feminine abasement, torture and wallowing in blood.

As in "The House of Horror" (July 1926).

That dauntless pair, de Grandin and Trowbridge, stranded on a dark and stormy night, take refuge in a creepy old place. The owner, a Dr. Marston, is evasive and sly. The beautiful young girl is drugged rather than sick. Observing Dr. Marston slinking through the night, de Grandin and Trowbridge follow him. He destroys their car, a prelude to destroying them. But it is not to be. The storm hurls down a limb, killing him emphatically.

They return to the mansion—and promptly wish that they had not. Down under the foundations in a sub-basement, they find a cluster of man-made monstrosities—the distorted flesh of seven once-beautiful girls whose misfortune it has been to look like the girl who jilted Dr. Marston. He has removed the bones of their arms and legs, split their tongues, widened their mouths, removed noses and chins, diverged their eyes.

About this time, the house collapses because of the rain. This eliminates the author's problem of what to do with seven monsters that must not be killed and couldn't be permitted to remain alive.

Before the house falls in, the drugged girl upstairs is saved. De Grandin's surgical genius will restore her eye muscles, the only mutilation Marston has performed to that time. This thoroughly ugly case is told artfully enough, using all manner of conventional horror images, from weird mansion and mad doctor to storm and mysterious night activities. All these preparations build to a scene of unconventional and uncompromising brutality.

An equally ugly story, although in a different vein, is "The White Lady of the Orphanage" (September 1927). De Grandin is called to investigate the disappearance of children from an orphanage. He uncovers a horrifying case of cannibalism. The story is tightly told, full of misdirection, and ends in a scene of disagreeable specific detail.

"Mephistopheles and Company, Ltd." (February 1928) has a new method of extortion. They convince women that they are the property of the Devil and he is coming for them. To save themselves, they must pay and

pay. De Grandin and Trowbridge invade their mansion (which is shielded by an electrified wall), save the lead girl in a raging pistol fight, and escape across the quicksands which engulf a number of minor characters.

"The House Without a Mirror" (November 1929) is another variation on surgical mutilation. This occurs away from Harrisonville, for a wonder, down in the hunting marshes along the Atlantic coast. There, in an ancient ruined house, lives a grim recluse, two blind servants, and the lovely girl whose face has been mutilated since infancy. A vengeful surgeon did it.

This wretch plans to return on her 21st birthday, cut out her tongue and exhibit her in a side show.

By those inscrutable rules governing the plotting of horror stories, de Grandin and Trowbridge arrive shortly before this fiend and henchmen come creeping through the marsh.

The ending is of satisfactory violence. De Grandin captures two henchmen, shoots another dead and the villain is strangled by the old recluse. As usual, Trowbridge contributes little; it is a rare day when he shoots or slugs anyone.

After these stimulating events, de Grandin demonstrates that skill developed as a plastic surgeon during World War I. He rebuilds the young lady's face from the neck up and, behold, she is beautiful. Alors!

The action is equally direct in "The Drums of Damballah" (March 1930). De Grandin leads the police into an underground nest of voodoo worshippers, secure under the streets of Harrisonville. There they writhe and chant, the kidnapped girls hypnotized or drugged and performing vile rites all unaware, the kidnapped infant wailing. Into this homey niche of Hell storms de Grandin and a pair of French Army revolvers, attacking eighty voodoo fanciers. Costello and his boys clean up the rest in a red-eyed slaughter.

Reading these stories half a century later, you get the strong impression that Quinn was carefully testing the taboos of his time, writing stories deliberately violating conventional moral positions. And doing so in such a way that it did not occur to readers to challenge underlying themes.

The pulp magazines were singularly unlikely vehicles for stories dealing with prostitution, cannibalism, lesbianism, incest or such exotic displacements of the libido. Yet Quinn managed to work all of these into his stories. It can't be said that he explored the themes seriously—but he acknowledged them, at a time when such explicit stuff was never exposed to a general audience.

In September 1934, Quinn published "The Jest of Warburg Tantavul," another appalling case thickly plastered with sexual material. Tantavul is a deranged father who strikes at his long-dead wife in a particularly hateful way. (Again the theme of disagreeable revenge.) His children do not know that they are brother and sister. Their father manipulates them into marriage, intended to reveal their relationship after they have had a baby.

Abruptly he dies, but not thoroughly enough. His ghost, a peering goblin face, returns to harry the girl. Learning, at last, that she has married her brother and borne an unholy child, as it were, she falls emotionally to

pieces and runs away.

Unable to stand memory, she leaps into a sizzling life of drugs, drink, prostitution and low living. De Grandin and Trowbridge rescue her after she has had two years as a scarlet woman. But almost before de Grandin is able to hypnotize her into forgetting the recent past, the goblin face comes chittering outside the window.

It can't enter because of the iron screen, a specific against chittering faces. Thoughtfully, de Grandin removes that screen, substitutes one of copper mesh. Attaches to this a transformer and power source. As the goblin slides rejoicing through the copper, on goes the power, and the horror is electrocuted.

It was partly material, de Grandin hastily explains, which is why the juice worked. But even so

Through all of these stories, sexual activity is constantly equated with evil. The punishment is torture, mutilation, dismemberment—a disgusting whirl of images culled from the Freudian darkness. In the May 1930 "The Brain Thief," a strong story, a singular hypnotizer destroys both men and women by converting them to wantons. They don't remember all the fun but come to themselves years later, their reputations exhausted, immersed in hopeless personal messes. It's all for revenge.

The wicked hypnotist is frankly murdered by de Grandin, who holds the rascal's head inside a red-hot stove, while Costello guards the door, ice-faced.

"The House of Golden Masks" (June 1929) contains ever more alluring sexual scenes. Young girls are abducted to a road house in Harrisonville where they are debauched for the South American market. The debauching involves, among other things, erotic dances and garment shedding before cheering tables of young bloods. How the girls were forced to these lusty performances isn't explained. De Grandin and police put an appropriate, if bloody, end to it all.

As for other stories, there are whippings enough, torture scenes enough, and more than enough of that favorite scene, the abasement of the heroine. Fortunate, indeed, is the girl who does not, at some moment during the story, find herself insufficiently garbed in silken wisps, or less, groveling before gloating powers.

The girl in danger is a usual fictional device for maintaining suspense. Even in the chaste pages of Edgar Rice Burroughs, the girl is abducted times without number. Always she is in sexual danger. That element never varied in the Burroughs' novels. He never said rape. And he never meant less.

It is true that such magazines as *Snappy Stories*, *Pep*, *Parisian Nights*, et al, struggled all story long to imply what their final paragraphs denied. While these publications maintained a small, if enthusiastic, readership, such general magazines as *Argosy* and *People's* rarely allowed the suggestive situation to develop past dim gray tints.

As you may recall, the heroine of "The Compass in the Sky" retains her 1917 virginity, although she is abducted and forced to sleep in *his* tent. It

seems improbable, but there you are.

It is startling then to find in a low-circulation magazine such as *Weird Tales*, the combination of advanced sexual experiences recorded during the de Grandin series. During the middle 1930s, those specialized magazines *Horror Stories* and *Terror Tales* glowed like furnaces with similar material. But such fantasies in jazz-mad 1920s America?

Fantasies they are. And adolescent fantasies to boot. They do not picture love, and in them the sexes do not come together by mutual consent. Rather the woman, bereft of her will, controlled by a stronger mind, yields herself without knowing. It is the stuff of neurotic fantasizing.

Through the fiction, they parade to humiliation: Women forced to become wanton (forced, yes, indeed). Women exposing their breasts. Women forced to dance lasciviously. Women helpless as their clothing is ripped away. Women painted and daring, their lips glaring against white skin. Women made mindless, yielding, sexually available by arcane art.

There are many reasons for the continued popularity of the series.

"The Devil's Bride" is particularly rich in instances of good, strong, out-and-out, provocative sex. The novel was published in *Weird Tales* as a six-part serial, February through July 1932. Long afterward, it was reprinted as a three-part serial in the *Magazine of Horror*, Nos. 26-28 (March-May-July 1969); and was again reprinted as a paperback in 1976.

The novel was the forty-sixth de Grandin adventure to be published and thus lies at the heart of the series. It is a reeling, bloody account of combat with a horde of devil worshippers.

Alice Hume is abducted during her wedding rehearsal by individuals unknown. Hotly affronted by this obvious breach of manners, de Grandin begins a long and difficult investigation, during which almost every woman in the cast is murdered.

A local cult of devil worshippers carried poor Alice off to serve as their priestess. Leads are few. Since, however, the cultists need babies to sacrifice, and murders and mutilations to perform, they are soon tracked to their lair.

During the search, de Grandin is aided by his old friend, Monsieur George Jean Jacques Joseph Marie Renouard, Inspector of the Surete. Renouard brings the news that devil worship is not restricted to Harrisonville but is, in fact, an international disorder. A world-wide organization, headed by a Russian, is growing in strength, preparing for an eventual attack upon all the nations of the world.

These revelations convert a middling novelette to the dignity of a novel. Just in time. The first half of the adventure has reached its natural climax as de Grandin and friends and waves of police hurl themselves upon the devil worshippers. But not before readers are treated to a detailed account of the celebration of the Black Mass. That out of the way, Alice is saved (dosed to the hairline with drugs) and the cult leader captured.

These agreeable events narrated, we reach the hurricane's eye. A second wall of cloud whirls toward us. But for the moment, narrative tension slacks to calm, as Quinn frantically rushes forth new plot elements

to support the next part of the adventure.

When becalmed, introduce new characters. The figure now brought on-stage and permanently into the series, is the genial British giant, Baron Haddingway Ingraham Jameson Ingraham, Captain of the Sierra Leone Frontier Police, and penniless nobleman. He is familiarly known as Hiji.

Hiji shows so many personality traits similar to those of Lord John Roxton (*The Lost World* and other Doyle novels) that they might have been cut from the same metal. In spite of that, he is an interesting character, so strong, in fact, that he has the tendency to overshadow de Grandin. He is brought on-scene since the novel is about to veer off to an African climax and a tough experienced African law type was required.

The reason they go to Africa is that Alice has again been abducted. The reason she is abducted, aside from moving the story to Africa, is that a general convention of devil worshippers is to be held there, deep in remote lands. Alice is still to be the Bride of the Devil. Her abductor is either the leader of the Harrisonville devil worshippers—who was electrocuted, autopsied, buried—or a reincarnation of him.

So it's off to Africa. Jungles, sullen natives, thatched huts, spears and enormous quantities of dialogue lifted direct from Edgar Wallace's "Sanders of the River" series. If the swipes are blatant, the source was good, for Sanders is an excellent series and recommended to young and old.

But enough of this literary talk. De Grandin and friends, and a young army bristling with automatic weapons, come to a freshly excavated Roman circus—stone seats around a central area, 100 yards by 50 yards, one end concealed by silken sheets.

The Devil worshippers have apparently appropriated this place from an Edgar Rice Burrough's novel. Anyway, here it is. There they are. Certain bloody preliminaries transpire. The silk curtains pull back, revealing an immense Devil. And Alice enters.

At the moment she is convinced that she has become a damned soul. She concluded this after waking to find two large curving horns projecting from her forehead.

At this, her morale quite collapses. Now, at the climax of the great ceremony, in she struts, quite abandoned to shame, her breasts bare, her hips thrusting seductively, a meaningful smile twisting her painted lips.

At the crucial moment, just an instant before Alice takes that final plunge into ecstasy and sexual degradation, Jules de Grandin strides forward—one small white-dressed fellow, assured, perky, lethal.

The head devil master dies under de Grandin's sword. Alice (feverishly covering her breasts) is saved. An absolute torrent of automatic weapons fire, plus a convenient landslip, eliminates the devil menace.

An interesting story. Some parts are as crude as a Race Williams adventure. So many abductions. So little shaping of Alice as a main character. So many interesting and undeveloped new characters. The narrative parts do not quite integrate—the African adventure is almost an epilogue, rather than a climax.

These flaws aside, it is an exciting, driving story, full of incident and

character, overflowing with material, continuously fascinating. Its pulsing vitality grips your attention.

Although it may make the girls uncomfortable.

During the first seven years of the series, 1925-1932, fifty de Grandin stories were published. From 1933 through the series' end in 1951, a span of eighteen years, only forty-three more stories appeared.

By the end of the 1930s and the early 1940s, Quinn's fiction gradually turned from de Grandin, although the letter columns in *Weird Tales* rattled with pleas for his return. We may surmise that more than ten years of writing pseudo-French dialect had left its mark, and Quinn found his interest turning to other aspects of the supernatural story.

Later de Grandin adventures were slighter in content, shorter in length. Many reflect Quinn's fresh interest in historical periods three or four hundred years before, in which he intermingles costume elements and supernatural drama. Situations from earlier cases are occasionally reworked, although Quinn does not repeat more than the concept. From that a new story is built, with new scenes and surprises.

De Grandin remains as effective as ever. You have the impression that he is drinking more. Hard to say, since he cheerfully drank to excess as often as possible at case's end. In earlier stories, he is seen to absorb two pints of brandy while puzzling out a problem and show no obvious effects. This extraordinary ability is forgotten later. When de Grandin drinks, he drinks to purpose and largely.

"The House Where Time Stood Still" (March 1939) reuses the idea of the July 1926 "House of Horror." Trowbridge carries much of the adventure upon his own shoulders, although ineptly. Hiji and Costello begin the matter. Important government papers have disappeared, and so has young Southerby, who was carrying them. Together our four main characters retrace his probable path across the state. The trail leads to still another of those grim old houses that dot the geography of Quinn's fiction. Trowbridge enters this place all unsuspecting to make a phone call. He has a simple heart. Immediately he is in the clutches of still another mad doctor, one Dr. Friedrich Friedrichsohn. (For it was war again with Germany and the headlines dictated the nationality of the popular fiction villains.)

Dr. Friedrichsohn is a monster in the grand old tradition. He surgically mutilates people, partly for revenge, partly for fun. That girl—whatshername?—who rejected him and married another: Now helpless in the Doctor's web, she has been given a shapeless, huge, limbless body, like a rugged sack, at the top of which perches her lovely untouched head. Her husband has gone quite mad since his scalp was grafted over his face. Now he plays the violin. And, yes, the doctor has captured Southerby and girl friend. They will be slowly carved to monsters over a long period of time; this is to inform the annals of science if they will continue to love each other when deformed.

Alas for the evil German doctor. He fails to watch the door. In de Grandin comes gliding and in a brisk display of savate, the German is



Weird Tales, November 1936. The poor girl, entranced, faces doom. She will soon be saved by Jules de Grandin, longest lived of the occult detective who employed physical violence to battle supernatural menace.



Weird Tales, March 1945. For twenty-six years, Jules de Grandin fought modern monsters and ancient evil. The threat varied. His success was constant and his character barely changed.

down, the mansion is aflame. Those who can be saved are rushed outside:

Trowbridge: "Where's Friedrichsohn?"

de Grandin: "He could not come."

An interesting story. As usual, the monsters die in fire. A few dim changes mark the surface of this lengthy series, but only a few. Costello's red hair is gray now, and Trowbridge is about sixty-five. In no other way does either show his age.

For those impelled to observe minute imperfections, "The House Where Time Stood Still" is listed on the cover of the February 1939 *Weird Tales*, although not published until the March issue.

The August 1939 "The House of the Three Corpses" is a taut mixture of mystery and adventure, very heady. De Grandin and Trowbridge discover three fresh corpses in an exotically appointed house. When the police arrive, the corpses are gone. Replacing them are two maniacs, male and female. The girl shrieks and beats the floor with her slipper. It is another vendetta case, this time featuring North African Druses equipped with gigantic poisonous centipedes.

Now ensues a thirty-seven-month gap when *Weird Tales* knows de Grandin no more and the letter columns chitter in that prose peculiar to those corresponding with pulp magazines. When the next story came forth, May 1942, the reason given for the long silence was that de Grandin had been at war.

His history: When war broke out in 1939 de Grandin immediately returned to France, served in Syria until Vichy signed the truce with Germany. Then he joined the Free French forces of Charles de Gaulle, eventually becoming a captain. During an attack on Dakar, he contracted enteritis, was reassigned as an intelligence and liason officer in England and America.

(For the record, Hiji became a major in the British infantry. Severely injured during the retreat from Dunkirk, he was discharged from service, sent as an attache to the British Consulate General in New York City.)

The May 1942 "Stoneman's Memorial" reintroduces most of the old cast. Both Costello and Hiji have stronger roles than de Grandin, and Hiji actually destroys the supernormal entity under our hero's very nose. It happened, you see, that this vindictive fellow discovered a magic formula for animating stone statutes and making them do his will. He has a statue and his will is murder. It is kill, kill, kill, up to the point that Hiji tosses a hand grenade at the thing. Later de Grandin executes the statue's master—and with Costello's full approval, too.

Now follows another lull. The next story does not appear until July 1944. "Death's Bookkeeper" is a voodoo doctor who can defer a loved one's death. For a price. The price includes the death of another person. The doctor balances accounts with death, takes a cash reward and so the title, obviously. In reality, it is an elaborately staged extortion plot. De Grandin goes to see him, fires off his cane gun, and Deaths's Bookkeeper goes into

Accounts Receivable.

Then off goes Major de Grandin (he has been promoted) to discuss the whole situation, perhaps with Manly Wade Wellman, a *Weird Tales* writer, a friend, an advisor, who is mentioned several times in the stories.

If the cases are fewer, now, they are all interesting. "The Green God's Ring" (January 1945) serves as entry into the world for that malignant force that is Siva. He/It causes all sorts of problems before de Grandin drives him out again. In "The Lords of the Ghostlands" (March 1945) de Grandin faces down the Egyptian Judges of the Dead across the flimsy protection of a mystic symbol traced in pigeon blood.

The background of this story is rather complex. It is a story within a story and to detail it all, one of the characters has a vision of past events leading to the present problem. This device will be used again, a long flashback incorporated at the story's heart. It gives an interesting perspective, although it reduces the cumulative force of the action and considerably lessens de Grandin's presence as the dominant character. Which may have been Quinn's intention.

The year 1946 introduces Ram Chitra Das, tenth son of a disgraced Nepalese princeling (married a dancer and fell from favor). Raised in England, a trained professional in the British Indian Police Intelligence Section, Ram Das is a powerful character and an attractive person. His wife is almost eight times as attractive, an exquisite feminine gem. They live in a second floor apartment on E. 86th St.¹⁴ Pelts strew the floor. Rugs strew the walls. The air is languorous with infatuating scents. Their landlord would have a fit at their decorating scheme.

In "Kurban" (January 1946), Ram Das joins de Grandin in saving a fool girl, awash in hashish, who offers herself as a living sacrifice to a pair of cobras and a calculating swami. "Catpaws" (July 1946) brings forth a Hindu killer. Ram Das carries most of the action, explains all the circumstances, and assumes much of de Grandin's function in his own story. They work with Lieutenant Costello in this, promotion having finally overtaken that fine old detective. "Eyes in the Dark" (November 1946) again features Ram and his wife, this time in less forceful roles. With their help, de Grandin uses two glass eyes to maneuver a murderous fakir into death by self-hypnosis.

Other cases are less Hindu-oriented. "Three in Chains" (May 1946) features a powerfully haunted house. It contains three ghosts. A medium digs out the background in a long flashback. This provides de Grandin with sufficient information to confront the ghosts and give them rest. They were not bad folk. Just disturbed.

"Lotte" (September 1946) is a strong poltergeist story. The spirit, furiously angry, steals ectoplasm from the wife to torment the husband. De Grandin finally isolates the thing. Greatly weakened, it is able to materialize only in two dimensions and so comes into view, spread across the wall like an evil decal. A fearful climax.

"Clair de Lune" (November 1947), the only story published that year, is a sort of vampire story: The beautiful actress renews her looks by absorbing

the youth of luckless girls. De Grandin locks her into a hospital room at her hour of need, and she expires in the mode of *She Who Must Be Obeyed*, although without dramatic flames.

Another long pause before the next case, "Vampire Kith and Kin" (May 1949). In the course of this, de Grandin catches a *vrykolakas* in a bottle and burns it in a furnace. At this late date, he is still hypnotizing young ladies by swinging his silver pencil before them. To prove that time flows onward, however, Trowbridge has given up surgery, although continuing in general practice.

"The Body Snatchers" (November 1950) are a man and woman who have achieved a sort of immortality by transferring their minds from body to body down through the ages. Until 1950, at Harrisonville, when their luck runs out.

The final story of the series, "The Ring of Bastet," was published in September 1951. It concerns *aelurophobia* (fear of cats) and Egyptian gods and possession and all manner of delights. A young woman, donning the ring of a priest of Bastet, is overwhelmed by the power of the elder gods. Her soul is saved by de Grandin, who evokes her belief in Christianity at the crisis. After which, as his last published act, he heads toward twelve ounces of brandy, a self-prescribed dose strong enough to terminate the magazine, as well as the series.

By 1951, the old world of the psychic investigator was a bright distant shining in the deeps of time. Electricity had superseded ghosts. The new physics nullified astral bodies. No longer did fashion speak of auras and finger the unsteady ouiji board or tingle weirdly at the thought of residual evil and woman suffrage.

It was a changed world, more remote, crammed with ominous mechanisms and social structures wobbling forward toward change. During de Grandin's span, Western Civilization had not merely altered but transformed itself in steps of successive brutality. The series carried the story of psychic adventure from Blackwood's gaslight to the Jazz Age, through the pulp magazine era and the Depression and the Second World War. At the end, teetering at the lip of the 1950s, de Grandin is as brightly attractive as ever. The stories glow like well-rubbed old pewter, artifacts from another age. They did not essentially change, although the Jazz Age is far distant from the Cold War.

De Grandin and his friends are figures of the 1920s. These times lingered in Harrisonville, even after the repeal of Prohibition, even during the worst of World War II. In Harrisonville, it is now and always 1925. The telephone still calls that admirable Dr. de Grandin to leave his plate of Lobster Diane and hurry forth, carrying with him the weary Trowbridge, toward still another leering horror.

Other psychic adventurers would embellish fiction. None reached de Grandin's stature. Of a certainty, no, surely not. Of him, one only—the incomparable, the extraordinary.

Another bottle, my friend. And bring him quickly forth. I faint, I perish. I am so vilely dry.

Footnotes to Jules de Grandin discussion.

¹⁶A chronological listing of the de Grandin stories appears in issues No. 13 and 15 of *Startling Mystery Stories*, a reprint digest magazine, dated, respectively, Summer 1969, Vol. 3, No. 1, and Spring 1970, Vol. 3, No. 3. An alphabetical listing of all Seabury Quinn's stories, including anthology appearances, is given as end material in the collection *Is the Devil a Gentleman?* Mirage, 1970.

¹⁷The Popular Library paperback series contains *The Adventures of Jules de Grandin* (Introduction by Lin Carter); *The Casebook of —* (Introduction by Robert Lowndes); *The Skeleton Closet of —* (Introduction by Manly Wade Wellman); *The Hellfire Files of —*; *The Horror Chambers of —*; and *The Devil's Bride*. Particular note should be taken of the informative "Afterwords" by Robert Weinberg, which appear at the end of each volume.

¹⁸Lin Carter's "Introduction" to the Popular Library edition of *The Adventures of Jules de Grandin* provides much material concerning Seabury Quinn.

¹⁹The portraits of de Grandin and Trowbridge, which first appeared in the September 1937 *Weird Tales*, are perfect representatives of the characters. Most regrettably, both sketches appear to have been lightly adapted from the faces appearing in a laxative advertisement of late 1936. A commentary and comparison of the pictures is given in Chet Williamson's article "The Case of the Moonlighting Physicians," *The Weird Tales Collector*, No. 6, 1980, pp. 14-15.

²⁰Harrisonville had a tendency to grow increasingly like New York City. As the series continued, the distinction blurred and merged. The town was supposed to be located an hour away from New York City by car.

Magazine Appearances of Series Characters

265

De Grandin, Jules by Seabury Quinn

<i>Title</i>	<i>Published in Weird Tales</i>	<i>Published Other</i>
The Horror on the Links	Oct 1925 May 1937 (rpt)	PF; ADV
The Tenants of Broussac	Dec 1925	SMS #4, Spr. 1967; ADV
The Isle of Missing Ships	Feb 1926	SMS #10, Fall 1968; ADV
The Vengeance of India	Apr 1926	SMS #11, Wint 1968/1969

The Dead Hand	May 1926	<i>PF; ADV</i>
The House of Horror	Jul 1926	<i>SMS #2, Fall 1966; CASE</i>
Ancient Fires	Sept 1926	<i>SMS #13, Sum 1969; CASE</i>
The Great God Pan	Oct 1926	<i>HF</i>
The Grinning Mummy	Nov 1926	
The Man Who Cast No Shadow	Feb 1927	<i>SMS #15, Spring 1970; ADV</i>
The Blood-Flower	Mar 1927	
The Veiled Prophetess	May 1927	<i>SMS #3, Wint 1966/1967; AL</i>
The Curse of Everard Maundy	July 1927	<i>ADV</i>
Creeping Shadows	Aug 1927	
The White Lady of the Orphanage	Sept 1927	<i>SMS #8, Spr 1968</i>
The Poltergeist	Oct 1927	<i>PF; HC</i>
The Gods of East and West	Jan 1928	<i>SMS #5, Sum 1967; HC</i>
Mephistopheles and Company, Ltd.	Feb 1928	<i>HF</i>
The Jewel of Seven Stones	Apr 1928	
The Serpent Woman	June 1928	<i>CASE</i>
Body and Soul	Sept 1928	
Restless Souls	Oct 1928	<i>PF; HF</i>
The Chapel of Mystic Horror	Dec 1928	<i>CASE</i>
	Nov 1952 (rpt)	
The Black Master	Jan 1929	
The Devil People	Feb 1929	<i>HF</i>
The Devil's Rosary	Apr 1929	<i>SMS #16, Sum 1970</i>
The House of Golden Masks	June 1929	<i>HC</i>
The Corpse-Master	July 1929	<i>PF; CASE</i>
Trespassing Souls	Sept 1929	
The Silver Countess	Oct 1929	<i>PF; CASE</i>
The House Without a Mirror	Nov 1929	
Children of Ubasti	Dec 1929	<i>PF; CASE</i>
The Curse of the House of Phipps	Jan 1930	<i>PF (as "The Doom of the ...)</i>
The Drums of Damballah	Mar 1930	<i>SC</i>
The Dust of Egypt	Apr 1930	<i>SC</i>
The Brain-Thief	May 1930	<i>SC</i>
The Priestess of the Ivory Feet	June 1930	
The Bride of Dewer	July 1930	<i>SMS#17, Fall 1970; SC</i>
Daughter of the Moonlight	Aug 1930	<i>SC</i>
The Druid's Shadow	Oct 1930	<i>SMS #6, Fall 1967</i>
Stealthy Death	Nov 1930	<i>HC</i>
The Wolf of St. Bonot	Dec 1930	<i>PF; HF</i>
The Lost Lady	Jan 1931	
The Ghost-Helper	Feb-Mar 1931	
Satan's Stepson	Sept 1931	
The Devil's Bride (6-part serial)	Feb through Jul 1932	<i>MOH (3-part serial), #26-28, Mar/May/Jul 1969; 1</i>
The Dark Angel	Aug 1932	

The Heart of Siva	Oct 1932	
The Bleeding Mummy	Nov 1932	
The Door to Yesterday	Dec 1932	
A Gamble in Souls	Jan 1933	<i>HC</i>
The Thing in the Fog	Mar 1933	
The Hand of Glory	Jul 1933	<i>HF</i>
The Chosen of Vishnu	Aug 1933	
Malay Horror	Sept 1933	
The Mansion of Unholy Magic	Oct 1933	SMS #1, Sum 1966
Red Gauntlets of Czerni	Dec 1933	
The Red Knife of Haasan	Jan 1934	
The Jest of Warburg Tantavul	Sept 1934	<i>PF, HC</i>
Hands of the Dead	Jan 1935	
The Black Orchid	Aug 1935	
The Dead-Alive Mummy	Oct 1935	
A Rival from the Grave	Jan 1936	
Witch-House	Nov 1936	
Children of the Bat	Jan 1937	
Satan's Palimpsest	Sept 1937	<i>LF #9</i>
Pledged to the Dead	Oct 1937	
Living Buddhess	Nov 1937	<i>LF #9</i>
Flames of Vengeance	Dec 1937	
Frozen Beauty	Feb 1938	
Incense of Abomination	Mar 1938	
Suicide Chapel	Jun 1938	
The Venomed Breath of Vengeance	Aug 1938	
Black Moon	Oct 1938	
The Poltergeist of Swan Upping	Feb 1939	
The House Where Time Stood Still	Mar 1939	<i>25 Stories</i>
Mansions in the Sky	Jun-Jul 1939	
The House of the Three Corpses	Aug 1939	
Stoneman's Memorial	May 1942	
Death's Bookkeeper	Jul 1944	
The Green God's Ring	Jan 1945	
Lords of the Ghostlands	Mar 1945	
Kurban	Jan 1946	
The Man in Crescent Terrace	Mar 1946	
Three in Chains	May 1946	
Catspaws	July 1946	
Lotte	Sept 1946	
Eyes in the Dark	Nov 1946	
Clair de Lune	Nov 1947	
Vampire Kith and Kin	May 1949	

Conscience Maketh Cowards	Nov 1949
The Body Snatchers	Nov 1950
The Ring of Bastet	Sept 1951

The following abbreviations have been used in this checklist:

ADV — *The Adventures of Jules de Grandin*, Popular Library, New York, 1976

CASE — *The Casebook of Jules de Grandin*, Popular Library, New York, 1976

DB — *The Devil's Bride*, Popular Library, New York, 1976

HC — *The Horror Chambers of Jules de Grandin*, Popular Library, New York, 1977

HF — *The Hellfire Files of Jules de Grandin*, Popular Library, New York, 1976

LF #9 — *Lost Fantasies* #9 — *The Sin Eaters*, Weinberg, Chicago, 1979

MOH — *Magazine of Horror*, Health Knowledge, Inc., New York

PF — *The Phantom Fighter* by Seabury Quinn, Mycroft & Moran: Publishers, Sauk City, Wisconsin, 1966

SC — *The Skeleton Closet of Jules de Grandin*, Popular Library, New York, 1976

SMS — *Startling Mystery Stories*, Health Knowledge, Inc., New York

25 Stories — *The Other Worlds — Twenty-Five Modern Stories of Mystery and Imagination*, edited by Phil Stong, Garden City Publishing Co., Inc. Garden City, New York, 1942.

and latterly...



The Ring of Bastet



Heading by Fred Humiston

IT HAD snowed earlier, then rained until the snow had melted into muddy slush; now a shrewish wind came scolding up from the Bay, and the sad black puddles that were the dregs of the storm

begin to glaze and shine with a thin film of ice beneath the street lamps' glare. Walking became hazardous, with the outcome of each step in doubt.

"Parbleu, mon ami," Jules de Grandin

muttered as he dug his pointed chin two inches deeper into the fur collar of his coat, "I do not like this weather. *Nom d'un poison!*" his feet slipped on the icy pavement and he caromed into me. "Let us seek the shelter. I do not wish to nurse a broken arm; also I am villainously hungry."

I nodded agreement. I'd treated half a dozen fractures due to falls on ice-glazed streets that winter, and had no wish to spend the next six weeks or so encased in splints and bandages. "Here's the Squire Grill. They have good steaks, if you'd care to try—"

"*Morbleu*, I would attack a dead raw horse without seasoning!" he interjected. "My friend, it is that I am hungry like a lady-wolf with sixteen pups."

The Squire Grill was warm and cozy. Windsor chairs of dark oak were drawn up to the tables, shaded lamplight fell on red-checked tablecloths, behind the bar a man in a white jacket polished glasses and at the far end of the room there blazed an open fire quite large enough to have burnt a Medieval heretic.

"*Une nan-de-vie, pour l'amour de Dieu*," de Grandin told the waitress, then as she looked blank, "A brandy, if you please, and bring her with the speed of an antelope, Mademoiselle."

The girl gave him a friendly smile—women always smiled at Jules de Grandin—then, to me, "And yours, sir?"

"Oh, an old fashioned without too much fruit, if you please, then two steaks, medium, French fries, lettuce and tomato salad—"

"And mugs of beer and apple tart and copious pots of coffee, *s'il vous plait*," the little Frenchman completed the order.

The look of pleased anticipation on his face became an expression of ecstasy as he cut into his steak, black as charcoal on the

outside, and pale watermelon pink within. He raised his eyes and seemed to contemplate some vision of supernal joy. "Ah," he murmured, "Ah, *mon Dieu*—"

The door swung open and a blast of frigid air came rowdying in, and with it came a party of young folks, healthy, obviously ravenously hungry, riotous with gaiety. They made a noisy entrance, moved with more than necessary noise to the long table set before the fireplace, and began calling loudly for service. Evidently they were expected, for a waitress hurried up with a tray of Martinis, and was back with another before the first round was finished.

A young man who had plainly had more than a modest quantum of pot-valiency all ready rose and held his glass up. "Lad-ees an' gen'men," he announced a bit unsteadily, "to—to th' bride'n groom; may all their troubles be little ones, an'—"

"Hold on, there, Freddy, hold it!" warned a blonde girl whose pink cheeks glowed with something more than the cold. "They aren't married yet—"

The young man seemed to take this under advisement. "U'm," he drew his hand across his face. "Tha's so, they ain't. Very well, then: Lad-ees an' gen'men, *les fiancés*. May they live long an' prosper!"

"Speech! Speech!" the youngsters chorused, pounding on the table with their cutlery. "You tell 'em, Scotty!"

A tall young man in a crew cut, tweed jacket and tan slacks rose in response to the demand. He was a good-looking youngster, blond, high-colored, with a casual not-long-out-of-college look that labeled him a junior executive in some advertising agency or slickpaper magazine's editorial staff. "My friends," he began, but:

"The ring, Scott—put your brand on her!" his tablemates clamored. "Stand up, Bina, it won't hurt—much!"

THE laughing girl who rose in response to the summons was small and delicate and looked as if she had been molded in fragile, daintily tinted porcelain. Her nose and brow and chin were aquiline but delicately proportioned, her skin exquisite. Framed by hair of almost startling blackness that fell to her shoulders and was cut across the forehead in straight bangs, her face had the look of one of those stylized pictures of a Renaissance saint. Coupled with the blush that washed up her pale cheeks her smile gave her a look of almost pious embarrassment. Demurely as a nun about to take the veil or a bride at her wedding ceremony, she held out a slim, fragile hand and the young man slipped a heavy ring on its third finger.

"Seal the bargain! Seal the bargain!" the demand rose like a rhythmed chant, and in obedience to it the girl lifted her face for his kiss. The flush deepened in her cheeks, and she sat down quickly as two waitresses came up with trays of steaming food and in their wake the *cellérier* with an ice bucket and a magnum of champagne.

De Grandin grinned delightedly at me above the rim of his beer mug. "*C'est très joli, n'est-ce pas?*" he asked. "*Dites*, youth is marvelous, my friend; it is a pity that it must be wasted on those too young to appreciate it. If—"

A shout came from the merry-makers' table. "Look at Binal! She's passing out!"

I glanced across the room. The girl on whose hand we had seen the ring placed had fallen back in her chair, but the look on her face was not one of alcoholic stupor. Her scarlet lipstick—the sole makeup on her face—seemed suddenly to stand out, vivid as a fresh wound, as if what little color she possessed had retreated behind it, changing the whole aspect of her countenance. Her lips hung open slackly, tried to move and failed, and in her eyes was a look of fascination such as might have been there if she saw a viper crawling toward her. "That girl's ill!" I exclaimed.

"*Pardies*, my friend, you are so right!" de Grandin agreed. "*C'est—*"

The girl rose slowly, like one who makes as little noise as possible before she takes

to panic flight, and walked toward the door of the restaurant. Her petella reflexes seemed to weaken as she stepped; her knees flexed and her feet kicked aimlessly, as if she suffered motor ataxia. Then suddenly her knees buckled and her legs twisted under her. She fell as limply, as flaccidly, as a filled sack from which the grain had run out, or a rag doll emptied of its sawdust. We saw the shape of total fear form on her face as we reached her. She turned wide, frightened eyes on us, and I noted that although her pupils were large and black they were rimmed by dark green irises. "My legs," she whimpered in a voice that seemed to shake with chill. "I can't move them—there's no feeling in them; but they're cold. Cold!"

"I am Dr. Jules de Grandin, this is Dr. Samuel Trowbridge," the little Frenchman introduced us as we knelt beside the fallen girl. Then, "You have no pain, *Mademoiselle*? No feeling of—"

"No feeling in my legs at all, sir. They're numb—and cold."

"U'm?" he raised the hem of her full, pleated brown wool-jersey dress and took the calf of one slim leg between his thumb and forefinger. "You do not feel?" he pinched the firm flesh till it showed white with the pressure.

"No, sir."

I noted that she wore no stockings and shook my head in disapproval.

De Grandin nodded. "Cold," he pronounced. "*Froid comme une grenouille.*"

"No wonder," I shot back. "You'd be cold as a frog, too, if you went traipsing out in sub-freezing weather with no more stockings than a—"

"*Ab bah,*" he cut me off. "Do not let Madame Grundy sway your judgment, Friend Trowbridge. It may be cold outside, but it is warm in here, and she sat almost within arm's length of that great fire. She should not have the chill."

I knelt beside him and laid a hand on the girl's leg. It was cold as a dead woman's, though the skin was smooth and sleek, without a sign of goose-flesh.

"You're sure you have no pain, *Mademoiselle*?" de Grandin asked again, leaning

dose to look into her eyes and nostrils. "No headache, no pains in back or sides or limbs—"

"No, sir. Nothing, till just now when my legs gave way under me."

He took his clinical thermometer from his waistcoat, shook it and thrust it into her mouth, then placed his fingers on her wrist. At length: "Pulse and temperature are normal," he reported. "It is not anterior poliomyelitis. Except for this localized chill and inability to walk—"

"Berger's paresthenia?" I hazarded.

He nodded doubtfully. "Perhaps. At any rate, she cannot lie here. Let us take her home and see what we can do."

JOBINA HOUSTON lived in one of those cubicles known as "efficiency apartments"—a single fairly large room with furnishings designed to lead a double life. The small round dining table could be rade into a bench by tilting up its top, a minuscule kitchenette, complete with porcelain sink and electric grill, lay in ambush behind a mirrored door, the divan opened out to form a bed, the chest of drawers did duty both as china closet and clothes press.

With the help of the blonde girl who had been ringleader at the party we got our patient into bed with hot water bottles at her feet and an electric pad under her.

De Grandin looked more puzzled than alarmed. "When did you first begin to notice this sensation of numbness, Mademoiselle?" he asked when we had made the girl as comfortable as possible.

She wrinkled her smooth brow. "I—I don't quite know," she answered. "It must have been—oh, no, that's silly!"

"Permit me to be judge of silliness and sense, if you please," he returned. "When was it that you first began to feel this dilly numbness?"

"We-ell, I think I first felt it just as Scott put the ring on my finger. You see," she hurried on, as if an autobiographical sketch would help us, "Scott Driggs and I both work at Bartlett, Babson, Butler and Breckenridge's advertising agency. He's in copy, I'm in production."

"Of course," he agreed as if he under-

stood her perfectly. "And then, if you please?"

"Well, we sort of drifted together, and— and suddenly we both realized *this is it*, and so decided to get married, and—" One hand crept from the shrooding blankets as she spoke, and began to smooth the bedclothes gently. "So tonight we gave an engagement party, and—"

"Mademoiselle, where did that ring come from, if you please?" he interrupted.

"Why, from Scott, of course. He gave it to me tonight—"

"*Bien oui*, one understands all that, but what I most desire to know is where did he get it—where did it come from originally?"

"Why, I really don't know, sir. Scott and I don't really know much about each other. All we know is we're in love—that's plenty, isn't it?"

He nodded, but I noticed that his eyes were on the ring with a long, speculative stare. "You do not know who was his father?" he asked at length.

"Not really, sir. I understand he was some sort of scientist, an explorer or something; but he's been dead a long time. Scott hasn't any family. He finished college on his G. I. money and came to work at B. B. B. & B. about the same time I did. So, as I said, our work threw us together, and we—"

A small frown of annoyance gathered between de Grandin's brows as he stared in fascination at the ring. It was a heavy golden circlet, heavy as a man's seal ring, and set with some sort of green stone which might have been peridot or sircon, or even a ceramic cartouche. Certainly it could not have been more than semi-precious, for it had no luster, although its color was peculiarly lovely. The gem was deeply incised with what appeared to be a human figure swathed like an Egyptian mummy, but having a peculiarly malformed head. "You recognize him?" he asked as I completed my inspection. I shook my head. To the best of my knowledge I had never seen such a figure before.

"Tell me, Mademoiselle," he demanded, "just what did you mean when you said you began to feel this so strange numbness at

the moment your fiancé put this ring on your hand?"

"I don't quite know how to put it, sir, but I'll try. Scott had just put the ring on my finger when the dinner came, and as I took the cover off my *côg au vin* I happened to look toward the fireplace and saw—" she halted with a little shudder of revulsion.

"Yeah, what was it you saw?" he prompted.

"A cat."

"A cat? *Grand Dieu des poires*, you mean a puss? Why not? Most restaurants have one."

"Ye-es, sir; I know. That's why I chose the Squire Grill for our party. They haven't one."

He raised his slim black brows. "*Qu'est-ce que c'est, Mademoiselle?*"

"You see, I'm one of those people who can't abide the sight of a cat. It terrifies me just to have one in the same room with me. There's a technical name for it. I forget—"

"Aclutrophobia," he supplied. "*Bien*, my little, you are one of those who cannot stand the sight of a puss-cat. What next?"

"At first I thought I must have been mistaken, but there it was, coming right at me, snarling, and getting bigger with each step it took. When I first saw it, it was just an ordinary-sized cat, but by the time it had advanced three feet it was big as a large dog, and by the time it almost reached the table it seemed big as a lion."

"Um? That is what terrified you?"

"Oh, you noticed how frightened I was?"

"But naturally. And then?"

"Then I began to feel all funny inside—as if everything had come loose, you know—and at the same time I felt my feet growing numb and cold, then my ankles, then my legs. I knew that if I didn't get away that awful thing would pounce on me as if I were a mouse, so I got up and started for the door, and then—" Her narrow shoulders moved in the suggestion of a shrug. "That's where you came in, sir."

He tweaked the needle points of his small blond mustache. "One sees." Turning to the girl who had come with us from the

restaurant, he asked, "Will you be kind enough to stay with her tonight? She has sustained a shock, but seems to be progressing well. I do not think that you will need do more than keep her covered, but if by any chance you should need us—" He scribbled our 'phone number on a card and handed it to her.

"O.K., sir," the girl answered. "I'll ring you if I need you, but I don't expect I shall."

"THE trouble with today's young folks is that they don't know how to drink," I complained as we left Jobina's apartment. "That gang of kids had been pub crawling—stopping at every bar between their office and the Squire, probably—and Jobina thought she had to match Scott glass for glass. No wonder she thought she saw a monstrous cat. The only wonder is she didn't see a pink elephant or crocodile."

De Grandin chuckled. "*La, la*, to hear you talk one might suspect you wear long underwear and drive a horse instead of a car. Friend Trowbridge. I fear, however"—he sobered abruptly—"that her trouble stems from something more than too much *gastric*—"

"D'ye mean to tell me that you think she saw that great cat?" I demanded.

"I think perhaps she did," he answered levelly.

"Nobody else did—"

"Notwithstanding that, it is entirely possible she saw what she claimed—"

"Humpf, when people see things that aren't there—"

"Perhaps it was there, spiritually, if not corporeally."

"Spiritually? What the devil—"

"Something not so far from that, my old," he agreed. "Suppose we call on young Driggs. He may be able to tell us something."

I expelled a long, annoyed breath. When he was in one of these secretive moods it was useless to question him, I knew from experience.

"How's Bina?" young Driggs greeted as he let us into his apartment something like a quarter-hour later.

"She seems recovering," the Frenchman answered noncommittally. "Meanwhile—"

"What was it? What was wrong with her?"

"One cannot say with certainty at this time. Perhaps you can enlighten us."

"If?"

"*Précisément*. You can, by example, tell us something of the history of the ring you put upon her finger just before her seizure."

The young man looked at him blankly. "I don't see what connection there could be between the ring and Bina's illness."

"Neither do I?" de Grandin confessed, "but if there is, what you can tell us may prove helpful. Where did it come from, if you know?"

"It belonged to my father, Dad was assistant curator of Egyptology at the Adelphi Museum in Brooklyn."

"Ah?" de Grandin bent a little forward in his chair. "It may be you can help us, after all, Monsieur. What of your father, if you please?"

"In 1898 or '99 the Museum sent him to Egypt, and while there he went up the Nile to Tel Basta, where—"

"Where the worship of Ubasti and Pasht, the cat-headed goddesses, was centered in the olden days," de Grandin interjected.

"Just so, sir. While Dad was poking round the old ruins he unearthed several little balls of what seemed like amber, except that it was much clearer, almost transparent. The Egyptian government had begun to clamp down on the exportation of relics, but Dad managed to smuggle three of the small spheres out with him. Two he gave to the Museum, the other one he kept."

"That little amber ball is among my earliest recollections. I used to look at it in awe, for buried in it was a gold ring with a green set, and when you held it to the light the stone seemed almost alive, as if it were an eye—a big green cat's eye—that looked at you."

"I don't know much about Egyptian antiquities, my tastes all ran to other things, but I remember Dad once told me the ring had once belonged to a priest of Bastet, the cat-headed goddess who personified the beneficent principle of fire."

De Grandin nodded eagerly. "Quite yes, Monsieur. And then?"

"My father died while I was still in the Army, and Mother left the old house in Gates Avenue and went to live with some cousins out at Pethogue, and when she died that little amber envelope containing the old priest's ring was about all she left me."

He grinned a little self-consciously. "Any man can give his girl a diamond—if he has the price—but nobody but I could give Jobina such a ring as that I put on her finger tonight."

De Grandin tugged at his mustache until I feared that he would wrench it loose from his lip. "How did you get the ring from its envelope, Monsieur?" he asked.

"I had a jeweler cut it out. He had the devil of a time doing it, too. I'd always thought the capsule that enclosed it was amber, or perhaps resin, but it proved so hard that he broke several drills before he could succeed in cutting it away from the ring."

The Frenchman rose and held out his hand. "Thank you, my friend," he told our host. "I think that you have been most helpful."

"You're sure Jobina'll be all right?" the young man asked.

"Her progress has been satisfactory so far," de Grandin took refuge in that vagueness which physicians have used since the days of Hippocrates. "I see no reason why she should not make a quick, complete recovery."

"What's it all about?" I demanded as we reached the street. "You seem to see some connection between that ring and Jobina Houston's seizure, but—"

"Your guess is good as mine, perhaps a little better," he admitted as he held his stick up to signal a taxi. "My recollections of the cults of Bastet and Pasht are somewhat hazy. I must put on the *toque de pensée*—the how do you call him—thinking-hat—before I can give you an opinion. At present I am stumbling in the dark like a blind man in a strange neighborhood."

It must have been sometime past midnight, for the moon which had come out

with the cessation of the storm had nearly set, when the ringing of the bedside telephone woke me. "Dr. Trowbridge speaking," I announced as I lifted the instrument.

The voice that answered me was high and thin with incipient hysteria. "This is Hazel Armstrong, Doctor—the girl you left with Jobina Houston, you know."

"Oh?"

"I'll say it's, Oh! She's gone."

"Eh? How's that?"

"She's gone, I tell you. Walked right out in her nightgown, and in this cold, too." Her voice broke like a smashing cup, and I could hear the sound of high-pitched sobbing over the wire.

"Stop crying!" I commanded sharply. "Stop it at once and tell me just what happened."

"I—I don't know, sir. I think she's gone crazy, and I'm scared. I did just as you told me, kept her covered up and kept the water bottles hot, but after a while I fell asleep. About ten minutes ago—maybe fifteen—I heard a noise and when I woke up I saw her standing by the door, about to go out. She'd pulled her nightgown down off the shoulders, and had a perfectly terrible look on her face. I said, 'Jobina, what in the world are you doing?' and then I stopped talking, for she looked at me and growled—growled like an animal, sir. I thought she was going to spring at me, and held a pillow up for a shield, but finally she turned away and went out the door. I didn't try to stop her—I was afraid!"

"Do not be frightened, Mademoiselle," de Grandin's voice came soothingly over the extension. "We shall go seeking her at once. Be good enough to leave the door unlocked."

"Unlocked? With a crazy woman on the rampage? Not me, sir. If you find her you knock three times on the door like this"—three sharp taps sounded as she struck the telephone with her nail—"and I'll let you in, but—"

"Very well," he agreed. "Have it that way, if you wish, Mademoiselle. We go in search of her at once."

"She can't have gone far in her nightclothes in such weather as this," I volun-

teered as we set out. "I only hope she doesn't develop pneumonia—"

"I greatly doubt she will," he comforted. "The inward fire—"

"The what—"

"No matter, I was only thinking aloud. To the right, if you please."

"But she lives in Raleigh Street, down that way—"

"We shall not find her there, my friend. She will be at Monsieur Driggs's unless I am far more mistaken than I think. When the cat goes mousing one goes to the mouse-hole to find her, *n'est-ce pas?*"

I shook my head. This talk of cats and mice seemed utterly irrelevant.

THE automatic elevator took us up to the floor where Scott Driggs lived, and the heavy carpets on the hall floor made our footsteps noiseless as we hurried down the corridor. "Ah?" de Grandin murmured as we turned the corner and came in view of his apartment entrance. "Ah-ha!" The door hung open and a little stream of pallid lamplight dribbled out into the corridor.

Through the door leading to Scott's bedroom, which stood ajar, we saw them like the figures in a tableau. Scott lay motionless upon the bed, and standing by him, seeming more a phantom than a person, stood Jobina Houston.

But how changed! She wore a nightgown of sheer silver-blue crêpe, knife-pleated from the bosom, and flaring like an inverted lily-cup from the waist, but she had torn the bodice of the robe, or turned it down, so bust and shoulders were exposed, and she was clothed only from waist to insteps. Her straight-cut uncurled black hair hung about her face like that of some Egyptian woman pictured on the frescoes of a Pharaoh's tomb, and as we stepped across the sill she turned her face toward us.

Involuntarily I shrank back, for never on a human countenance had I seen such a look of savage hatred. Although her lids were lowered it seemed her eyes glared through the palpebrae, and the muscles round her mouth had stretched until the very contours of her face were altered. There was something feline—bestial—about it, and bestial

was the humming, growling sound that issued from her throat through tight-closed lips.

The glance—if you could call it that—she threw in our direction lasted but a second, then she turned toward the man on the bed. She moved with a peculiar gliding step, so silently, so fustively that it seemed that she hardly stepped at all, but rather as if she were drawn along by some force outside herself. I'd seen a cat move that way as it rushed in for the kill when it had finished stalking a bird.

I opened my mouth to shout a warning—or a protest, I don't know which—and de Grandin clapped his hand across my lips. "Be silent, species of an elephant!" he hissed, then stepped across the room as silently as the foam moving toward the bed.

"Jobina Houston," he called softly, yet in a voice so cold and distinct it might have been the tinkle of a breaking icicle. "Jobina Houston, attend me! Do not be deceived, Jobina, God is not mocked. The Lord God overcame Osiris, threw down Memnon's altars and made desolate the temples of Bastot and Sechemet. Those Olden Ones, they have no beings; they are but myths. The fires upon their altars have been cold a thousand years and more; no worshippers bow at their shrines, their priests and priestesses have shuddered into dust—"

The woman faltered, half turned toward him, seemed uncertain of her next step, and he walked quickly up to her, holding out his hand imperatively. "The ring!" he ordered sharply. "Give me the ring thou wearest without right, O maiden of the latter world!"

Slowly, like a subject under hypnosis, or a sleep-walker making an unconscious gesture, she raised her left hand, and I could have sworn the green stone of her ring glowed in the lamplight as if it were the living eye of a cat.

He drew the heavy circlet from the girl's slim finger and dropped it into his pocket. "Quick, Friend Trowbridge," he ordered, "take a blanket from the bed, envelope her in it as in a *camisole de force*—what you call the strait-jacket! Quickly, while her indecision lasts!"

I obeyed him mechanically, expecting every moment she would resist me ferociously, but to my astonishment she stood quiescent as a well trained horse when the groom puts the harness on it.

"Bien," he ordered, "let us take her home and see that she is rendered docile with an opiate."

Half an hour later Jobina lay tucked in bed, sleeping under an injection of a half-grain of morphine. Hazel Armstrong had gone home, the city's noises had sunk to a low, muted hum, and in the east the stars were paling in the light of coming day.

"NOW" maybe you'll condescend to tell me what it's all about?" I asked sarcastically as we drove home after turning Jobina over to the nurse for whom we'd telephoned the agency.

He raised his narrow shoulders in the sort of shrug that no one but a Frenchman can achieve and made one of those half-grunting, half-whinnying noises no one but a Frenchman can make. "To tell the plain, ungilded truth, I am not sure I know, myself," he confessed.

"But you must have had some idea—some relevant clue to it all," I protested.

"Yes and no. When Mademoiselle Jobina first showed signs of being overcome last night I thought as you did, that she had been taken ill, but the more I examined her the farther from a diagnosis I found myself. The sudden onset of her symptoms did not seem to match any disease I knew. Then when she told us about seeing the cat-thing almost at the moment Monsieur Scott put the ring on her finger I was still more puzzled. As you were at such pains to point out, no one else had seen the thing; the vision, if it may be called such, had been entirely subjective, something visible to her alone. It did not seem to me that she had drunk enough to see nonexistent animals, yet. . . . Then I observed the ring, and suddenly, something clicked in my memory. 'Where have you seen a ring like that, Jules de Grandin?' I asked me, and, 'At *Le Musée des Antiques* in Cairo,' I replied to me.

"'Bien, and what about that ring, Jules de Grandin?' I asked me.

"I searched my memory, trying to recall all that I knew about it as one struggles to recall the tune of a forgotten song.

"*Eb*, then I had it! It had been a priest's ring from Bubastis, the city of Ubasti or Bastet, the cat-headed goddess!

"Now Bastet, or Ubasti, was the sister and the wife of Ptah, who shaped the world and had his shrine at Memphis. She typified the benign influence of heat, the warming sun that made the grain to grow, the fire that gave men comfort. She was a mild and rather playful goddess, and therefore was depicted as a woman with a cat's head—the kind, affectionate and gentle pussy-cat we like to have about the house.

"*Eb bies*, she had a sister variously known as Sechemet and Mericnphtha who was her antithesis. That one represented the cruel principle of heat—the blazing sun that parched the fields and threw men down with sunstroke, the fire that ravaged and consumed, more, the blazing heat of savage, maddened passion. Now, strangely, though they represented bane and blessing to be had from the same thing, the sisters were depicted exactly alike—a woman swathed in mummy-clothes with a cat's head and wearing an uræus topped by the sun's disc. Their temples stood nearby each other in the city of Bubastis, on the site of which the modern mud-village of Tel Basta stands.

"Good. When the Persians under Cambyses swarmed over Egypt in 525 B.C., the city of Bubastis was among the first they took. *Parbleu*, they were the *boches* of their day, those Persians; all that they could not steal they destroyed. So when the priests of Bastet and Sechemet heard they were about to come they hid their temples' treasures. Some they sunk in the Nile, some they buried, some few they took with them.

"As part of his ecclesiastical vesture the priest of Bastet and Sechemet wore a gold ring set with a green stone like a cat's eye. Many of these they enclosed in capsules of balsam resin, which was also an ingredient of their embalming. The rings thus held in their protective envelopes were buried in the earth—it was much easier to find a sphere larger than a golf ball than to hunt for a ring buried in the shifting sand.

"And then what happened I ask you? *Mordieu*, the Persians came, they pulled the city's walls down, razed the temples to the ground, killed all the people they could find, then went upon their way of conquest.

"The years went by, the Romans came, and after them the Arabs, and still those priestly rings lay buried in their envelopes of hardened balsam. Explorers delved among the ruins of the once great temple-city and dug these rings up and took them to museums. Young Driggs's father was one such. He brought back three rings of Bastet, two for his museum, one for himself, remember?"

"Yes," I nodded, "but what connection is there between the ring and Jobina's seizure, and—"

"Be patient, if you please," he interrupted. "I shall explain if you will give me time. Like priests of every cult and faith, the priests of ancient Egypt were a class apart. They were vowed to their gods, none others might serve at the altar, none others invoke divine aid, none others wear the priestly vestments. You comprehend?"

"I can't say that I do."

"*Eb*, then I must make the blueprint for you. As far as can be ascertained, such priestly rings as came to light were either melted down for their gold or taken to museums; none were ever worn. Jobina Houston seems to be the first one not initiated into the priesthood to wear a ring of Bastet on her finger.

"*Tiens*, those olden gods were jealous. They took offense at her wearing that ring. Bastet, or possibly Sechemet, appeared to her as in a vision, paralyzed her with fright, and finally took possession of her mind and body, driving her to make a makeshift imitation of an Egyptian priestess's costume and go to young Driggs's house to wreak vengeance on him for the sacrilege he had committed when he put the sacerdotal ring on a profane finger.

"Oh, *pschaw!*" I scoffed. "You really believe that?"

"I do, indeed, my friend. Jobina Houston had a morbid fear of cats, therefore she was doubly sensitive to the influence of the cat-headed goddess. In ancient days that ring

had soaked up influences of the old temples when it adorned the finger of some priest of Bastet or Sechemet; it had lain sealed in resin for a full thousand years and more. Those influences could not be dissipated because of the hermetic sealing of the balsam envelope that held them. Then when they had been released from their integument those forces—those psychic influences with which the ring was saturated—were released from it as water is released from a squeezed sponge. The malefic forces took possession of Jobina like a tangible mephitic vapor. She was helpless under their influence."

"U'n-h'm," I agreed doubtfully. "I've heard of such things, but how was it you managed to arrest their working? When you called to her in Scott Driggs's flat she seemed like a sleep-walker and made no effort to resist when you demanded the ring. How was that?"

"Ah, there I took the chance, my friend. I played the hunch, as you would say. I knew that girl had been brought up religiously. She believed firmly in the power of God—of good. She was like a person in light hypnosis, unable to control herself or her movements, but able to hear outside voices. So I called to her, reminding her of the great power of God—reminded her how He had overcome the heathen world and made a mock of all the pantheon of heathen gods and goddesses. In effect I said to her,

"What are you, a Christian woman, doing when you listen to the blandishments of heathen deities? Don't you know that they are powerless before the might of the Lord God?" A child may dread its shadow, but when its father tells it that the shadow has no substance, *poof!* that fear is gone. I told her that the forces that enthralled her had no being, that they were but myths and memories—just the shadows of old dreams that vanished in the brightness of the face of God. And so it was. For just a little moment she rebelled against their malign power, and in that moment I took off the ring. Then *poof!* the charm was broken, the spell dissolved, the powerhouse of their influence put out of commission. *Voula!*"

"What about the ring?" I asked. "Will you give it back to Scott?"

"Of course," he answered, "but only when he promises to give it to some museum. That thing is far too dangerous to be left where unwary young women may slip it on their fingers. Yes."

Down came, heralded by an ever-widening crimson glow, as we turned into the driveway. "Tovar," he raised a hand to pat back a great yawn. "I am a tired old man, me. I think I need a tonic before I climb into bed. Yes, certainly; of course."

"A tonic?" I echoed.

"But yes. I prescribe him, Four ounces of brandy, the dose to be repeated at five-minute intervals for the next quarter-hour."



Sleepers

By DOROTHY QUICK

OUT of the night what laughter sprayed the air
Cadenced and fell into some timeless void
A vibrant instant, then no longer there?
One sleeper heard it and his sleep destroyed
Awoke in rage, another did not care,
And still another, hearing music gleam
Across the starlight from he knew not where,
Was drunken with the magic of a dream.